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EXCURSIONS
IN
ITALY.

VOL. I.

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EXCURSIONS

IN

ITALY.

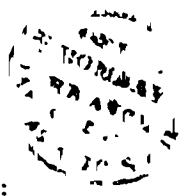
BY C. FENIMORE COOPER, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF "THE PILOT;" "THE SPY;" "EXCURSIONS IN SWITZERLAND," &c. &c.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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PREFACE.

If the author were required to give a reason why he has written these volumes on a country so well known as Italy, he might be puzzled to give any other answer than that he loved the subject, and has been indulging his own recollections possibly more than he will please his readers.

As this, like most other books, must speak for itself, the author has little to add, in the way of Preface, to what has already been

published in the work with which his travels commence. He has endeavoured to avoid a pretension which his research would not justify, while he hopes some may be glad to go over again, even this beaten road, in his company.

Cooper's Town,
1838.

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ITALY.

LETTER I.

Departure from Milan.—Lodi.—A Quack.—Frog-eating.—Battle at the Bridge of Lodi.—Piacenza.—The Duchy of Parma.—Charges at Inns.—Castel Guelfo.—Parma.—Modena.—Composition floors.—Bologna.—Its Towers.

ALTHOUGH we had breathed an atmosphere of delight from the moment the carriage turned out of the glen of the Doverie to enter the first really Italian valley, the ardour of expectation and enjoyment was scarcely diminished when we entered the carriage to quit Milan, on our way towards the barrier of mountains that separates the Upper from the Lower, the false from the true Italy. We had certainly some of the architecture, glimpses of the nature, and a multitude of the recollections of

the latter, where we then were; but we well knew that there was more beyond, and we were glad to hurry towards it after the two or three days of repose that we had now taken. As yet we had only seen Cis-Alpine Gaul.

Old Caspar mounted his horse with renewed vigour, and he trotted through the southern gate with us, some time before the sun had risen. Although it was only the 15th of October and we were now fairly on the great plain of Lombardy, the morning was so sharp that I found both a surtout and a cloak agreeable, if not necessary.

The streets of Milan, and indeed of all the towns of this part of Italy, have lines of flat stones, a sort of railways, laid for the carriage-wheels; the celebrated Corso having two tracks, in order that the vehicles may not intercept each other. The town walls are of bricks, and a good deal covered with ivy; and as the ditch is imperfect and neglected, they were probably more efficient in the days of the Visconti than in those of Napoleon. Military patroles march the streets at night, and all night, so that the

place is orderly and safe. We saw people with many *goitres* in the streets, peasants most probably from the valleys of the Alps.

We took the route to Lodi, which is about twenty miles from Milan. The road lay the entire distance through meadows and vines. There was little other prospect than that of fertility, for we were in a sea of plain, though the Alps still lifted their hoary peaks along the northern horizon. South, east, and west, the sight was bounded with a fringe of fruit-trees, with, here and there, a gaunt church-tower thrusting up its neck, to mark the site of a village. There was, however, a good deal of irrigation, with canal-like ditches, among the meadows, and occasionally a broad margin of faded verdure around us.

At Lodi we stopped two hours. The inn windows overlooked the market-place, which was teeming with the activity, gesticulation, bawling, humour, and wrangling of low Italian life. One fellow, mounted on a horse, was haranguing a crowd; and, leaning forward, I caught enough to discover that he was a quack

dispensing immortality at very modest prices. Suddenly a peasant presented his face, when the fellow extracted a tooth, without dismounting. The operation was performed with great readiness, and, flourishing his prize in triumph, while the poor patient was holding his jaws and kicking right and left with pain, the fellow called on all around him to witness how slight a thing it was to lose a tooth.

Observing great quantities of what I supposed to be small birds, beautifully white and clean, strung on coarse grass, I went down to examine them, thinking they might be some game of which it would be well to know more; but, on inspection, they proved to be the hind quarters of frogs! There were hundreds of strings of them in the market. I know not how the French got their reputation of frog-eaters, unless it comes through the usual English prejudice; for I feel certain that ten frogs are consumed in Italy for one in France. Indeed, frogs are rather an unusual dish in Paris; nor do I remember ever to have seen them anywhere on a private table. The coun-

try around Lodi, however, is just suited to such a stock, and, literally, thousands are consumed by the inhabitants.

We were anxious, of course, to examine the celebrated bridge. I found, however, that the people on the spot did not deem the battle so serious an affair as it is usually imagined; and as I have heard, on pretty good authority, that several of Napoleon's battles were fought principally in the bulletins, I went doubting to the river. The stream, you know, is the Adda; it is straggling, and a good deal disfigured by sand-banks. The bridge, six or eight hundred feet in length, is narrow; and the land opposite the town is a low meadow. A few houses on that side mark the approach to the bridge, and the buildings of the town do the same thing on the other. As it would be physically impossible to cross this bridge under the fire of batteries of any force that were in the least well managed, and as the Austrian artillery, moreover, if not the very best, is considered among the best in Europe, I was a good deal staggered with the appearance of things. The result of all my in-

quiries on the spot was as follows, and I presume it is not far from the truth.

The Austrian army was in retreat, and had thrown the Adda between itself and its enemy. Napoleon arrived in pursuit. Ascertaining that the stream might be forded, he sent a detachment with that object towards a flank of his enemy, and the Austrians retired, leaving a force to protect their retreat at the bridge. Anxious to strike a blow, Napoleon decided to force this point immediately, and ordered the attack. My informant affirmed that most of the Austrian artillery had commenced retiring before the assault was made; and this appears, at least, probable. Finding that his column paused under the fire of the few guns left, Napoleon and his generals cheered them on in person. The French did not get across until the Austrians were too far on their retreat to make the affair decisive, but soon enough to seize some of the guns in the rear; guns that the Austrians probably intended to sacrifice.

I give you this account as it was given to me by one who affirmed he was an eye-wit-

ness. Certainly, after seeing the bridge, I shall not believe that one army crossed it in face of another that was not completely disorganised. *Au reste*, it was sufficiently hazardous to attempt it in the face of a couple of efficient guns; and the personal intrepidity of the generals would be abundantly apparent even under such circumstances. It was probably a gallant thing, though by no means the thing we are accustomed to believe it.

Lodi is a town of some size, having a population of sixteen or eighteen thousand souls: it is the place in and near which the celebrated Parmesan cheese is made, the environs being chiefly in rich meadows. No Italian, I find, thinks of eating his soup without a spoonful of this cheese, which as regularly forms one of the ingredients as salt. It struck me as a discrepancy in civilisation to eat frogs and not to know how to make good coffee; for we have quite taken leave of the latter since we crossed the Alps.

The country continued much the same beyond Lodi. Towards evening we discerned

the towers of a town in the visible horizon, and soon after came to the side of a sluggish stream of some size, lying low between banks that it sometimes evidently filled. The town was on the opposite side, walled, and not immediately on the stream. The river was the Po, which we crossed by a bridge of boats, and, making a little circuit, we drove through a gateway and entered Piacenza. Ordering dinner, I walked out to look at the place, which contains more than 25,000 inhabitants. It is gloomy, crowded, and dull. Indeed, it is not easy to see how so many towns of this size are kept up on so small a surface. There does not appear to be any commerce worth mentioning; the manufactures are usually on a small scale, and half the people seem idle. There is a small palace belonging to the sovereign, of tolerable architecture. It has fifteen windows in front, while that of the governor of the place has thirteen. I believe the White House has less than either of these; though Piacenza is merely a provincial town, and the duchy of Parma itself contains less than half a million of souls.

Austria has made a very convenient arrangement for the defence of this frontier. She has a right, by treaty, to maintain garrisons in several of the towns that lie in the adjacent territories; by which means she gains so many outworks beyond her own limits. Piacenza is thus garrisoned, as is also Ferrara. This town and its walls are principally constructed of bricks: an unusual thing on the continent of Europe. The walls seem going to decay.

In the evening I strolled into the great square, which I found thronged with people. These towns are so cramped within their fortifications, that walking, except in an area like this, or on the ramparts, is almost out of the question; and as they all have a *place d'armes*, the people have acquired the habit of resorting thither for air and exercise.

There was a silent, gloomy crowd in the square; and as many of the men wore cloaks and were smoking, it reminded me of Spain, a country whose habits may very well have been introduced through the princes. You will remember that, by an intermarriage with the

heiress of the Farnese family, this duchy passed into the possession of the Spanish Bourbons. It was a short time in the hands of the Emperor, as an indemnity, and by him again ceded to the Bourbons. Three generations of the latter family next reigned here; but the last gave up his duchy for the ephemeral kingdom of Etruria; one of the bungling jobs at king-making that Napoleon turned off during his own apprenticeship. At the peace of 1814, Marie Louise received Parma in full sovereignty; but this arrangement was subsequently altered, and she now holds it for life, the reversion being settled on the present Duke of Lucca, who is the son of its ancient sovereign, the King of Etruria. At his succession, I believe Lucca is to be annexed to Tuscany. In speaking of the size of the palace, I ought to have mentioned that Piacenza was once a separate duchy; to which circumstance it probably owes that structure.

We were off at six, as usual, and trotted on merrily, through a perfectly level country, though apparently less fertile and less peopled than Lombardy Proper. Until now, since we

entered Italy, our course has been generally south; but on quitting Piacenza we diverged materially towards the east, travelling almost in a parallel line with the ranges of the Apennines, whose forms began to loom up, a little, in the haze of the atmosphere.

We had been warned of the necessity of bargaining at the inns for what was ordered; but higgling is so odious, that I had done nothing of the sort, preferring imposition. The last night at Piacenza, however, I left the family in the carriage, and went to look at the rooms myself, asking the price. Under these circumstances, I found that about half as much was demanded as I had hitherto paid. The result showed that our lodgings and supper cost very little more than the breakfast alone, and yet we had a parlour and four good bed-rooms! The next day, at breakfast, I ordered the meal at so much a head, and for so many persons: there was no difference in the service, or in its quality, and we paid three dollars for that which had cost us five the previous day.

We crossed the bed of a torrent that was ab-

solutely dry, but broad, and spanned by a noble bridge that Napoleon had commenced and which his widow has just finished. Nearly everything is constructed of bricks, still. Near Parma we passed an old castellated edifice that excited a good deal of curiosity among us by its name, which is Castel Guelfo. I could get no history of this fortress, but it is fair to presume it had some connexion with the wars of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines. The building stands directly on the road, like a tavern, and in a perfectly level country. The main edifice, which is very high, is ranged around a court; it is about one hundred and fifty feet on each front, and is constructed of bricks and small stones placed in alternate layers of about three feet in thickness. The structure is surrounded by a ditch that is now dry. Three or four low, heavy, awkward towers are attached to the square building; and several appendages are scattered about, without the ditch. The whole is dilapidated, though still inhabited.

We reached Parma very early, the day's work being less than forty miles, over a per-

fect plain, although it nearly carried us from one side of the duchy to the other. This is a much finer town than Piacenza, and materially larger. We were no sooner housed and refreshed, than we hurried off to see the palace, the theatre, and the other curiosities. The first is an ancient irregular edifice of bricks, with a small, new, stüccoed façade. The theatre is one of the largest in Europe, and, one would think, capable of holding all the *élite* of the duchy. A covered gallery built on arches connects it with the palace, of which it is properly an appendage.

We saw many cockney sights, such as the cradle of the young Napoleon, and other similar wonders; but the duchess herself, of whom I could gladly have stolen a glimpse, was at Vienna, where she passes most of her time. The servants spoke of her as *Sa Majesté*, and told us that she maintained a good deal of state. She has three or four thousand troops, *gendarmes* included; and we saw the garrison here, in coats of sky-blue faced with red.

The Academy of Arts repaid us for the visit.

It has many good pictures, one in particular by Correggio, who was a native of the vicinity. Here we met, for the first time, with specimens of architecture that, I believe, are nearly, if not quite, peculiar to Italy. A tower is erected near the church to contain the bells, which is called the *campanile;* and a sort of dome stands at hand, a structure altogether apart, in which the office of baptism is performed. The latter, from its object, is called the *Battisteria.*

I have seldom seen quainter or ruder specimens of the Gothic than we found here, in a church of the middle ages. One of the bas reliefs is a car drawn by two horses, of which one is actually placed on the back of the other, from ignorance of the laws of perspective. This is almost as bad as the bas reliefs in the rotunda of the Capitol. But all nations have their Gothic ages; though it is to be hoped ours is to precede, and not follow the golden.

We breakfasted at Reggio, in the duchy of Modena, a place which gives the title of Duke to Marshal Oudinot. The country continued much the same, perfectly level, with the shadows of

mountains on our left, and apparently fertile. We reached Modena itself, again, very early, and had time to look at the sights, the best of which are in the palace of the duke, consisting of pictures. Here we also first saw composition floors, made of stucco, in imitation of marble. When several coats of mortar have been laid, and beaten to a proper consistency, pieces of marble are stuck in it, so as to variegate the effect, and sometimes in a way to form designs. When the whole has indurated and set, the surface is polished. The result is a beautifully mottled floor, richer than any natural stone, much cheaper, and, if well made, perhaps as durable. It would be well to adopt this mode of ornamenting houses in America. We might commence in the public buildings and in large private houses. It has the additional recommendation of security against fire. In a warm climate, however, it is the most desirable; though carpets can be used over the stucco, in winter, as well as over boards. The servants told me that a little oil mixed with bran or saw-dust, and swept

over the floor, had the effect of brightening the colours and of rendering the whole brilliant. This process is repeated once or twice a week.

The palace was neat, well kept, and large for the Duchy. Even this structure puts Windsor to shame, so far as the internal arrangements, and the beauty and lightness of the rooms are concerned. Modena is a town of five-and-twenty thousand souls, and, like most of the places of this part of Italy, the wonder is what they find to do. The reigning family was also at Vienna; for all this region, though governed by different princes and held by different titles, is virtually Austrian.

Our next day's march was still easier, extending no farther than Bologna, where we arrived about noon. The frontier of the States of the Pope was passed near the town of Modena, most of the road lying in the new territory. It was on the line of the ancient *Emilia Via.*

Here, then, we were at last on the confines of Lower Italy, and though the Apennines threw up their bold heads between us and our goal, we began to feel as if we had arrived. In

the mean time, we sallied out to see the wonders of Bologna.

The streets of this town are lined with arcades, like those of Berne, though loftier, lighter, and of better architecture than the gloomy vaults of the city of the *Burgherschaft.* The architecture is altogether superior. You will be surprised to hear that the same cause has induced this particular mode of building; viz. the snows! Although in the heart of Italy, Bologna, lying at the foot of the Apennines, and on their northern side, is liable to have its streets obstructed with snow. There is a church on a hill, at the distance of a league from the town, and certain pious persons have actually caused a covered walk to be constructed the whole distance to it. It is an arcade open to the south, and protected towards the north by a wall. So much for the climate of Cis-Alpine Gaul!

The pictures of Bologna gave us great satisfaction; but the subject is so hackneyed, that it is seldom I shall enter into details about such things. The wax-work preparations have a

horrible truth, and though probably useful as anatomical studies, are odious as spectacles. The same things exist at Paris, in equally disgusting accuracy.

There are two ugly motiveless brick towers in this town, one of which is of great height, and the other is not low: one leans out of the perpendicular in the way to make a spectator shudder. They have not much more beauty than the chimneys of a paint manufactory, and seem to have been built precisely for the reason that boys often pile bricks, with one leaning over the other, or just to ascertain where a line drawn from the centre of gravity will fall without the base. These babyisms on a large scale are apt to succeed the noble conceptions of a great nation, when in its decline. I believe, however, there is some pretence of utility connected with the best of these extraordinary freaks, and some pretensions to workmanship.

Bologna gives one an idea of the riches of Italy, in palaces and the arts. Its venerable and celebrated university is on the wane; but there are noble remains of its former wealth,

learning, and importance. Many of the first families of Italy still reside here, and its society is said to be very desirable. But what can one who passes a day in a tavern tell you of these things that is worth knowing?

LETTER II.

Prospect of discomfort from crowded Inns.—Wildness of scenery among the Apennines.—Apprehensions excited by a bandit-looking Peasant.—Disappointed of accommodation by a knowing Courier.—An Inn of truly Italian character.—In travelling, servants fare better than their masters.—Approach to Florence.—The Cathedral square.

CASPAR paid me a visit, after dinner, with an ominous face and a more ominous report. He had ascertained that not less than twenty carriages were to cross the mountains next day. This augured badly for our comfort. In the first place, we might have a famine, or be brought to chestnuts, the true diet of the Apennines; and moreover, there was but a single house within a day's work of Bologna where we could possibly sleep. The ex-dragoon affirmed that nothing could pass him while actually in motion; but they who travelled post had the advantage of not stopping at all,

and of course would win the plate. Nothing remained to be done but to get the track at starting, and to throw ourselves on our speed with at least the hope of distancing all the *vetturini*.—We accordingly drove through the gates of Bologna, before the day had fairly dawned. The inquiry of Caspar, whether any one had preceded us, was satisfactorily answered, and, cracking his long whip, the happy fellow trotted merrily to the foot of the first ascent. The road carried us very soon into the mountains, and here we bade adieu to the sea-like plain of Upper Italy.

For the first two or three hours we did little else but ascend; but it was evident that the piles were not Alpine. The road, however, was excellent, and though the country was scarcely grand enough to be imposing, or sufficiently soft to be pleasing, it had a peculiarity in its features that served to keep attention alive. We found the inn on the edge of what may be called the first considerable plateau—if any portion of mountains that are a succession of rounded caps can thus be term-

ed. We were the first arrived, and were rewarded for our diligence by getting the first breakfast. If it was the best, our successors were to be pitied, for it consisted of execrable coffee, bad bread, tallowish butter, and greasy chops. One seldom sees a meaner repast in a log-house on the American frontier. Inferior as it all was, the laughing Caspar assured me those who came after us would fare worse, for we had consumed all the milk;—"*et les voilà*," he added, pointing down the mountain to a train of carriages that were dragging their weary way up the ascent. By this time we were ready to move, and away the dragoon trotted, chuckling at his own management as much as at our success.

The region we were now in had a wildness and a character that, to us, were entirely novel. Most of the mountain-tops were bald; and, indeed, as far as the eye could extend, west and south, it beheld nothing but a species of elevated downs, that were however much broken into irregular valleys and hills. There was a little forest, here and there; but, in the

main, nakedness was the prevailing characteristic of the view. As I sat on the carriage-box, I could see the road leagues ahead of us, winding its way among the ascents, and forming an object of high civilisation amidst the otherwise rustic and quaint peculiarities of the wilds. I can best compare the view to the backgrounds which the old Italian masters sometimes put to their religious subjects, and of which treeless hills, rocks, winding paths, and picturesque towers compose the materials. Of the latter, however, there were no signs in this portion of the Apennines.

Soon after quitting the inn, an expanse of water showed itself to the north-east, quite in the horizon; for in that direction we could still overlook a vast reach of hazy, and of nearly indistinct plain. Judging by the map, the land was the Bolognese, with the country near Ravenna, and the water the Adriatic! As this glimpse was quite unexpected, it came upon us with the agreeable variety of a surprise.

Just after the water disappeared, a swarthy,

picturesque-looking peasant passed us, on a brisk trot, eyeing the carriage keenly as he went by; he then leaped into a cross path, that led in nearly a direct line towards the winding ascents of the road, that were plainly visible at the distance of two or three miles, but to reach which we were compelled to make a long *détour*. A valley and a wood were between us and these ascents, and unpleasant thoughts began to suggest themselves at this little incident. I had heard of families borne off into these very Apennines by banditti, and held for ransom, failing of which they had been murdered. Robbers would have full an hour to do their work in; for the peasant, who had just left the tavern, must have understood the order of our march, and be certain that our party would be unsustained by any other for that time at least. Then there were a startling sagacity and a suspicious observation in the dark rolling eye that had so closely scanned us; and, all together, the fellow had about him the air of premeditation and design.

We were four men, and, with a pistol apiece,

might have made a good defence; but I had not even a penknife or a cane, and Caspar had nothing but his whip! At times, I was disposed to laugh at my own apprehensions; but the heavy responsibility that I felt continued to render the matter serious. Still I was unwilling to alarm the females, and preserved silence, determining to halt in season if I detected any symptoms of an ambuscade before us. With this purpose I kept a vigilant look-out on the formation of the ground; and though I was not so much alarmed as to fancy every bush an enemy, no bush was left unexamined.

At length we began to descend, and I cheered Caspar up to a pace that would at least render aim a little uncertain. I now determined, as the road was excellent, the instant a shot was fired, to cause the postilions to set off on a run, and leave the issue to our speed. The fall of a horse, it is true, would undo us; but we must trust to fortune. As the postilion, unless an accessary, is generally the first victim in such an affair, I got ready to jump

on the pole, and to spring into his seat should the ex-dragoon fall. The *fourgon* speaking for itself, and being a visible temptation to robbers, I had hopes too, by abandoning the baggage, at least to save the females. All these plans were duly arranged in my own mind, that no advantage might be lost in the confusion of a surprise.

While busy fancy was at work in this manner, during which time we passed over two or three of the most uncomfortable miles I ever remember to have travelled, we came to the foot of the long descent. Here, happily, was a house or two, and a group of men in the road, with five or six yokes of oxen, ready to assist us up the winding and sharp acclivities that lay in front. Foremost among these honest people was my dark-eyed peasant, who had run across the open waste merely to give notice of our approach, and to notify to the neighbourhood the number of oxen that would be required!

This was the first serious alarm I had felt about Italian banditti, and, I may add, it was

the last; though I believe we were subsequently in situations where less indifference than this incident served so much to create would have been more prudent. As fear, though particularly contagious, excites no sympathy after the danger is passed, I kept my own secret.

By the help of the oxen we toiled our way up as steep ascents as one sees in Switzerland, though by no means as long; after which we had a succession of hills and valleys, through the same naked region as before. Towards the close of day we reached a village, or rather a hamlet, near which is a remarkable burning field that we dared not stop to examine, on account of our pursuers. The inn was soon in sight, and old Caspar pointed to it with his whip and grinned. Then he cast a glance of triumph back at the long winding road that might be seen for miles. Half a league in our rear three or four carriages had come into view, for it would seem that their owners too had bethought them of the night and its wants. The evening was lovely. A—— was on the carriage-box with me,

enjoying its blandness, and we were all full of a sort of racing excitement, and laughing at our success. At this very moment, when the inn could not have been half a mile from us, *click clack, click clack,* was heard close to the carriage-wheels. A courier, in the usual livery, galloped past us, flourishing his whip in bravado, and before we could get there he dashed up to the door of the inn! In a few minutes, however, we were there too; and when I went into the house, the fellow was leaning coolly in the door. My inquiry for rooms was answered by showing me two or three mean closets, without fireplaces or comforts of any sort. As the house was tolerably comfortable, I demanded better apartments. All the rest of the house was taken by the courier at the door, who was in the service of Lord Lansdowne. The plot was apparent at once. The rogue had entered into an arrangement, pretended or real, with the innkeeper, and rooms were to be sold at an advance. I had a slight acquaintance with Lord Lansdowne, and had half a mind to wait

his arrival and trust to his known courtesy for accommodations; but, preferring independence to being placed in controversy with a courier, Caspar was ordered to proceed. The innkeeper felt disposed to change his tactics when he saw the carriage departing; but I was not disposed to humour roguery, and we went our way.

There was an inn about two leagues farther, and the road was good. It is true, Caspar shrugged his shoulders when he mentioned it; but I thought the best accommodations of even an inferior inn, in our sole possession, might be better than the worst of the place we had just left in the midst of a crowd. Our departure caused long faces; but the example probably did no good, the house possessing a monopoly.

The moon had risen, and the night had grown chilly, before we reached the other inn. It was a single house, in a sort of heathy country, the very type of solitude. Here, however, we were joyfully received. Mounting by a narrow flight of steps, we were shown

into the *sala*, a room of some size, lighted from above, and surrounded by bedchambers. In one corner there was a fireplace, and a faggot was soon in a bright blaze. The beds were homely but clean, and I took care to secure one for each of us, with the proper number of apartments. This was the first house we had entered that had a truly distinctive Italian character, and we submitted to some few wants, all the more readily, from the circumstance. The woman of the house was all assiduity and attention, and it was not long before our supper made its appearance. Our great desire was to dispose of this, and to get quietly into our own rooms, before any more of the rejected travellers should arrive from the other place. None came, however, though we had one or two alarms, and we ate our chickens fried in oil undisturbed. Secure of the supper, we strutted about our *sala*, admiring the novelty of the situation, gazing at the wild waste from the windows, and setting all couriers at defiance.

I have since been told that this very inn

was the scene of many robberies and murders that were perpetrated with the connivance of the parish priest, and which were subsequently discovered. The host had however been changed, and we were now in honest hands. Certainly no house could be better situated for deeds of violence; and there was even something in its internal arrangements so retired and gloomy as to aid such practices. Altogether, we enjoyed the excitement of the incidents, preserved our place on the road, had an entire house to ourselves, gained two leagues in distance, and considered ourselves the gainers.

We kept the track in the next day's racing. Much of the way was descending, and the southern faces of the Apennines, like those of the Alps, were more genial and fertile than the northern. I ought to have said that we entered Tuscany near the place where the alarm had been given by the peasant. I shall take this occasion to say that, with a slight exception, on entering France and the Milanese, the custom-house officers have given us no

trouble between this and London, although we have passed through eight different states, and entered the ninth. We have uniformly met with civility: nor have the *douceurs* been heavy; and what is more, they have followed, and not preceded, the politeness.

To-day we passed a spot where high poles lined the road; a precaution to enable travellers to keep it, in the deep snows. This was Alpine, and yet the spot was on the brow of the southern margin of the range. We strained our eyes, in the hope of getting a glimpse of the blue Mediterranean, but in vain.

The grasping courier galloped past us again; but we now regarded him and his *bidet* with indifference. The olive soon appeared, a meagre, formal, insignificant tree in a landscape, with a pale and stinted leaf, making altogether a miserable substitute for the apple, though an evergreen. Still one looks at it with pleasure; as one does also at the orange, the pomegranate, the fig, the date, and other trees of Oriental associations, though none but the fig has much beauty. Even the supper of the previous night,

though saturated with oil, savoured more of Italy, and was so much the more agreeable than the lame imitations of French cookery we had met with previously. Having asked one of my servants how they fared in the mess of old Caspar, she laughed and told me that ever since we had left Berne, the postilions and domestics, out of the large towns, had fared better than the masters; this little attention to the caste of *voituriers* being a tribute to their power. On this hint, I had the curiosity to visit their table, and I found the statement literally true. Old Caspar laughed heartily at the exposure, and altogether the whole party, which included the domestics of two or three other travellers, appeared to think it a capital joke. What renders the palpable conspiracy more absurd, is the fact that the servants figure in the bills for the merest trifles,—at a franc or thirty sous a meal, I believe. On my remarking that the people of the house had made a mistake apparently, having served both us and them with the wrong breakfast, the whole party, my own people included, burst out in a fit of

merriment, that showed how much they enjoyed the blunder. "*Ce sont des grands coquins, ces aubergistes, monsieur,*" observed Caspar, by way of apology.

At length we reached a descent that communicated, by a gorge, with the valley of the Arno. Soon after the city of Florence appeared, seated on a plain, at the foot of hills, with the dome of its cathedral starting out of the field of roofs, like a balloon about to ascend. We crossed a part of the plain, between groves of olives and mulberries, went beneath a sort of triumphal arch, erected, I believe, in commemoration of the completion of the great road that we had just been travelling, and entered the gate of the city. A few pauls were given to the custom-house officers, and the carriage rolled freely along the broad flat stones, with which all the towns of Tuscany are paved, the gutter being in the centre of the street. We proceeded to the Hotel York, a house which is so called from the cardinal of that name, took rooms, and unloaded the *fourgon*, for the first time since quitting Berne.

It was but a step to the cathedral square, and I was no sooner dressed than I ran out to feast my eyes with its wonders. The buildings had a mottled look that displeased me, being faced with differently coloured marbles; but the magnitude of the church is imposing. The *campanile* has the same fault; though, a finical thing in itself, it can better bear finery. The baptistery is near by, and altogether the spot has the charms of magnificence sustained by those of association. The servant pointed out a particular stone, on which Dante, it is said, used to seat himself in the cool of the evening, in order to breathe an air less confined than that of the streets.

This night I first learned to respect a musquito. If Buffon had in view the comparative merits of these insects when he broached his theory of the inferiority of the animal nature of America to that of Europe, there is more apology for the extravagance of the supposition than is commonly thought among ourselves. Luckily we had musquito nets,—a thing I never saw at home, by the way,—and

though they were full of holes, the creatures were too large to find their way through them. One fellow did get in, however, and he made as much noise as the horn of a mail-coach, at the distance of half a mile. The next morning poor Lucie, who I fancy had no net, looked as if she had the small-pox.

LETTER III.

Florence.—Formerly the focus of Trade.—Palaces constructed like Fortresses.—Moderate price for Lodgings.—Wine sold by great Families.—Character of the Florentines.—Feelings on visiting the Antique Statues.—A favourite residence with Foreigners.—Rage for travelling.—The Count di V——.—English Amateur Theatricals.—English feeling towards America.—Receptions of the Prince Borghese.—Waltzing.—Notable persons observed at the Pergola.

As it was our intention to pass the winter here, old Caspar was discharged, and we took lodging. Florence is full of noble hotels, which are termed palaces in the language of the country, and few families still retaining a sufficient portion of the ancient wealth to occupy the whole of such huge edifices, apartments are let in them, furnished, or not, as it may happen, on the French plan. Hunting for lodgings gives one a good idea of the domestic economy of a place, for we entered some twenty or thirty of these palaces with this object. Rooms are unusually cheap, notwithstanding the number of strangers

who resort to the place, for the town has shrunk to less than half its ancient population, and probably to a tithe of its ancient magnificence.

We became fully impressed with the changes that time produces, not only in things, but in the moral aspect of the world, by seeing a town like Florence. In our age, the man who should dream of making an inland place, in the heart of the Apennines, the focus of trade, would be set down as a simpleton ; nor could any powers of combination or of wealth now overcome the efforts of those who would naturally resort to more favourable positions.

These old merchants, however, men who truly ennobled commerce, and not commerce them, have left behind them more durable remains of their ascendency than can be seen in almost any other place. As they were not particularly pacific, however, the constant struggles of factions in the streets induced a style of architecture that is almost peculiar to Florence, for every palace is a sort of fortress. We took an apartment in one that belongs to an ancient family who still inhabit a portion of the

building, and as our rooms are on the street, we may be said to occupy the fortress. The great gate is of iron, and the great stairs, of course, massive and solid. The lower floor is occupied only for the offices and stables. Then comes what is called a *mezzinino,* or a low story, with small windows, but which has some very good rooms. Above this is our apartment, with cielings nearly twenty feet high, large rooms all *en suite,* and windows to look out of which we ascend two steps. The walls would bear considerable battering, though the position of the house protected it from any danger of such a nature. Forty or fifty stout-hearted retainers, and the number would not be great for the old Florentines, must have been able to stand a respectable siege in such an abode.

You will ask me what are my impressions, on finding myself entrenched behind such works, with a thousand recollections of the Medici and the Strozzi, and the Capponi, to awaken the love of the romantic and interesting? Alas! I am filled with the consciousness of the impotency of man, who, after rearing these piles,

and guarding against the violence and ungovernable passions of his fellows, is obliged to allow that all his resources cannot keep out the musquitoes.

We have two noble bed-rooms, besides several smaller; a large drawing-room, and a larger dining-room; a good cabinet for myself; an ante-chamber, and baths, offices, &c. &c. all furnished, for the moderate sum of sixty dollars a month. We have ten good rooms in all, besides the offices.

Our hotel has a small court, and, I believe, a garden; though I have not had access to the latter. By the side of the great gate is a small hole in the wall, closed in general by a shutter. At eleven o'clock every day, people come to this shutter and rap, and it is opened by a steward of the family. The applicant puts in an empty flask and a paul (ten cents), receiving in return a flask filled with wine. In this manner, I understand, most of the great families of Florence now dispose of the products of their vines! It would be curious to learn if the Medici carried on this trade. The wine of our

palace is among the best of Tuscany, and I drink it with great satisfaction; the more so because its cost is about four cents the bottle. It is positively much better wine than half the claret that is drunk in Paris. Twice a week, a donkey appears in the court, dragging a little cart filled with flasks from the estate, and carrying away the "dead soldiers." We are, however, a little above the market, as our wine commands fully a cent a flask, or about four mills a bottle, more than most of the Tuscan liquor.

We burn in our lamps oil that you would be happy to get on your lobsters and salads. In other respects the market is good, and cloths are both fine and cheap, finer and cheaper than I remember to have seen them anywhere else, and yet they are imported! The shopkeepers are moderate in their wishes, preferring the *dolce far niente* to the more terrible *energies* of trade.

There is a sleepy indolence in these Italians, that singularly suits my humour. They seem too gentlemanlike to work, or to be fussy, but

appear disposed to make a *siesta* of life, and to enjoy the passing moment. The Tuscans seem full of sentiment, and though the poor, as is the case all over the continent of Europe, are very poor, the class immediately above them have as much satisfaction, I fancy, as they who dream dollars and talk dollars from "the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same." If you ask me if I would exchange populations and habits, I shall answer, we cannot afford it. It would check our career short of perfect civilisation. We have arts to acquire, and tastes to form, before we could enter at all into the enjoyments of these people; one half of their pleasures depending on recollections that possibly may have had their origin in the *energies* of the first of the Medici; and there are things that must be created, but which give more satisfaction in after ages than during the period of their formation. For myself, I begin to feel I could be well content to vegetate here for one half my life, to say nothing of the remainder. All who travel know that the greatest pleasure is in the recollections; and I fancy

that nations in their decline enjoy more true happiness than nations in their advance.

Of course, I have visited the Venus, and the Pitti, and all the other marvels of art that Florence contains. These things have been so often described, that my remarks shall be limited to such gleanings as others appear to have left, or as are suggested by my own passing feelings. The tribune of the gallery contains the most precious collection of ancient art, perhaps, in the world. Everything in it is a *chef-d'œuvre* in its way; though I am far from seeing the necessity of believing that every old statue that is exhumed is an original. When I was introduced into this place, I felt as if approaching a presence of illustrious personages, and stood, hat in hand, involuntarily bowing to the circle of marble figures that surrounded me, as if they were endowed with sensibilities to appreciate my homage. You are not, however, to suppose that a love of art was so much at the bottom of this reverence, as association. There was a set of engravings in my father's house that represented most of the antique statues, and for

these I had imbibed the respect of a child. The forms had become familiar by years of observation, and the Venus, the wrestlers, the dancing faun, and the knife-grinder, four of my oldest acquaintances on paper, now stood before my eyes, looking like living beings.

Florence is walled, but it is in the style of three or four centuries ago, and the defences may be set down as of no account in the warfare of our own times. There is a citadel, however, of a more warlike character, reserved, I suspect, for state purposes. The walls are picturesque, but, failing of the great military object, they are next to useless, as they are not provided with promenades. *Au reste,* they are a little *Jerichoish,* or as I have already described those of Morat to be.

Economy, the galleries, the facility with which one obtains lodgings, caprice, and the court, unite to make Florence a favourite residence with strangers. The court has a little more of air and pretension than it might otherwise possess, from the circumstance of the sovereign being an archduke. Tuscany, however, is

a respectable state, having nearly a million and a half of subjects, with Lucca in reversion.

Among the strangers the English and Russians predominate; especially the former, who are found in swarms, on the Continent, in all the most agreeable places of residence. The policy of the Tuscan government encourages diplomatic appointments, and I believe all the great courts of Europe have ministers here. The French, Russians, English, Austrians, and Prussians have ministers plenipotentiaries, and many others *chargés d'affaires*. All these things contribute to render the place gay; nor is it without brilliancy at times, the little court appearing at the festivals and other ceremonies with sufficient pomp. I shall not philosophise on these things, but I fancy they do more good and less harm than is commonly thought by us democrats. I have often compared the *agrémens* of this little town with those of one of our own larger cities. New York, which is four times as large as Florence, and ten times as rich, does not possess a tithe—nay, not a hundredth part of its attractions. To say nothing of taste, or

of the stores of ancient art, or of the noble palaces and churches, and the other historical monuments, the circle of living creatures here affords greater sources of amusement and instruction than are to be found in all of the five great American towns put together. Every one appears to be at leisure, and the demon money seems to be forgotten, unless, indeed, he occasionally shows his talons at the gaming-table. An evening party offers the oddest collection of human beings imaginable; for the natives of half the civilised countries of the world appear to have met on neutral ground in this little capital, the government having the liberality to tolerate even men of political opinions that are elsewhere proscribed. I met at a *soirée*, lately, besides a proper sprinkling of Tuscans, and Italians from the other parts of Italy, French, Swiss, Germans from half a dozen states, English, Russians, Greeks, Americans from several different countries, Dutch, an Algerine, an Egyptian, and a Turk. There were, in addition, sundry adventurers from the islands of the Mediterranean.

This is the age of cosmopolitism, real or pretended; and Florence, just at this moment, is an epitome both of its spirit and of its representatives. So many people travel, that one is apt to ask who can be left at home; and some aim at distinction in this era of migration by making it a point to see everything. Of this number is a certain Count di V——, whom I met in America just before leaving home. This gentleman went through the United States, tablets in hand, seeming to be dissatisfied with himself if he quitted one of our common-place towns with an hospital unexamined, a mineral unregistered, or a church unentered. It struck me at the time that he was making a toil of a pleasure, especially in a country that has so little worth examining. But, a short time since, I dined with my banker here. At table, I was seated between the Marchese G——, a Sardinian, and the Baron P——, a Neapolitan. Alluding to the locomotive propensities of our times, I mentioned the ardour for travelling, and the industry I had witnessed in the aforesaid Count di V——. Signor G—— told me

that he knew him intimately, having himself visited all the North of Europe in his company, previously to which his friend had explored Greece, Egypt, Northern Africa, and the West of Asia, by himself. "When he left the United States," continued Signor G——, "it was to go —where?" "To the West Indies and Mexico." "True; and from the latter he came through Columbia to Brazil, where I was at the time. He left me there to cross the Andes, and I cannot tell you what has become of him."—"Why do you not come to the East Indies?" said an Englishwoman to me the same evening, and to whom I had been introduced as to a lady who lived in that part of the world, but who had taken a mere run from Calcutta to pass the summer in Switzerland, and the winter in Italy. —"I fancy few mere travellers get as far as Hindostan?"—"Oh, we have them occasionally. Now, the winter before I left home, we had one for several weeks in our own house: he only left us to go to the Himalayah mountains, and return a few months before I sailed" —"An Englishman, of course?"—"No, in-

deed; an Italian."—"Pray, ma'am, was it Count Carlo di V——?" — "Yes, it was." — "And may I ask what has become of him?" — "He left Calcutta to go to Ceylon and Manilla, on his way to China." So much for our own times!*

The strangers are at the head of the gaiety of this place, few of the Florentines *receiving* much. In this number may be included Prince Borghese, the brother-in-law of Napoleon, an amiable, well-intentioned, and modest man, who has abandoned Rome, his proper country, to reside here, where he maintains a good style, opening his palace periodically for the reception of all who choose to come. Then we have, besides the regular exhibitions of the town, rival houses in two English theatres, with amateur-performers; at the head of one of which is Lord B——,

* This unhappy gentleman subsequently lost his life by falling into a boiling spring in the island of Batavia! He was probably the greatest traveller that ever lived; having, so far as the writer can learn, visited every country in Europe, Persia, Palestine, Egypt, and all northern Africa; nearly, if not every country in America, and most of the East! By adding New Holland and the islands, he would have seen the world.—Would he have been any happier for all his toils and dangers? It may be doubted.

and at the head of the other Lord N——. At the latter only, however, can one be said to see the legitimate drama; the other running rather into music,—an experiment not to be idly attempted in Italy.

We have seen Shakspeare in the hands of these noble actors once or twice, and found the representation neither quite good enough to please, nor yet bad enough to laugh at. Occasionally, a character was pretty well represented; but the natural facility of the other sex in acting was sufficiently apparent, the women making out much better than the men. It was like all private theatricals, well enough for a country house, but hardly in its place in the capital of Tuscany. We had a specimen of the feeling of the English towards America, as well as of national manners, the other evening, that is worth a passing notice. One of the players sang, with a good deal of humour, a comic song, that attempted to delineate national traits. There was a verse or two appropriated to the English, the French, the Germans, &c. &c. and the *finale* was an American. The delineations

of all the first were common-place enough; the humour consisting chiefly in the mimicry, the ideas themselves having no particular merit. But the verse for the American seemed to be prepared with singular care, and was given with great unction. It represented a quasi Western man, who is made to boast that he is the lad to eat his father, whip his mother, and to achieve other similar notable exploits. I do not know that I am absolutely destitute of an appreciation of wit or humour, but, certainly, it struck me this attempt was utterly without either. It was purely an exaggerated and coarse caricature, positively suited only to the tastes of a gallery in a sea-port town. The other verses had been laughed at, as silly drollery, perhaps; but this was received with — how shall I express it? — a *yell of delight* would not be a term too strong!

No one is more ready to give proper credit to the just-mindedness and liberality of a portion of the English than myself; but the truth would not be told, were I to leave you under the impression that their tone prevails even

among the better classes of their society, in relation to ourselves. You will remember that this song was not given to the pit or galleries of an ordinary theatre, but to a society in which there were none beneath the station of gentlemen, and that I should deem this caricature altogether beneath the intelligence and breeding of the company, were it not for the singular rapture with which it was greeted. It is a much more laughable commentary on this extraordinary scene, that, just as it was finished, the Count di —— leaned over and whispered to me that the dislike and "*jealousy*" (I use his own words) of the English for the Americans seemed inappeasable! I observed that the side of the room that was chiefly occupied by the people of rank was mute, the nobles maintaining a cold and polished indifference; but in the other end of the *sala*, which was filled with half-pay officers and the *oi polloi* of the travellers, the *yell* was quite suited to the theme. One might have fancied it the murdered father shrieking under the knife of the parricidal son.

At the *receptions* of Don Camillo Borghese, as the Romans style him, one sees most of the strangers. These entertainments are *dansantes*, and, as the rooms are large and the music noble, they are imposing; though the company is far from being of the purest water. As a proof of this, a noisy party preceded us, the other evening, the young men calling out to each other, "Where is the fat man?"—"Now for the fat man," &c. the prince being almost unwieldy from his size. Waltzes are the favourite dances; though no people know how to waltz but the Germans—or, indeed, to play the necessary airs, but their musicians. It has struck me that I have seen no people who had the organ of *time*, but the Germans and the negroes of America: and a waltz without the utmost accuracy in the movement is a ridiculous dance. I have observed that the young women of condition in France and Italy were not often permitted to join in this dance, by their mothers, with men as partners, unless the latter were near connexions; and as the latter arrangement cannot well be made

in a public ball, none joined in the waltzes here.

As a specimen of the sort of *omnium gatherum* that Florence has become, I will give you a list of some of the notables that were seen, recently, in the first row of the Pergola, the principal opera-house, here. First, there was the Count St. Leu, as he is styled, or the ex-king of Holland. Near him was the Prince de Monfort, his brother, or the ex-king of Westphalia. In the same row was Mrs. Patterson, once the wife of the last-named personage. At no great distance was Prince Henry of Prussia, a brother of the reigning king. In the same line, and at no great distance, sat Madame Christophe, ex-empress of Hayti, with a daughter or two. In addition to these, there was a pretty sprinkling of chiefs of revolutions, *littérateurs* of all nations, ex-ambassadors, and politicians *en retraite*, to say nothing of mere people of fashion.

The winter has come upon us sharply, ice forming freely in the ditches around the town, and skates coming into requisition. I have seen

snow impending over us, in falling clouds even, but it vanishes before it reaches the ground: though the Apennines are occasionally powdered. Once, and once only, a little has lain in the streets, but not long enough, or in sufficient quantities, to enable one to say it has covered the stones. Still it is snapping cold, and we find our good wood fires as comfortable as in New York.

LETTER IV.

Journey to the Coast.—Lucca.—Pisa.—The leaning Tower.—The Campo Santo.—Santa Maria della Spina.—Leghorn.—The Port.—American Man-of-war.—The Protestant Cemetery.—Climate of Italy not genial for Invalids.—Beauty of the Peasant Girls.

G—— W—— has been here, and we have made a run together down to the coast. We parted in June last, you will recollect, in Amsterdam, he on his way to Moscow, and we on ours to Rome, where he is likely to arrive before us, as he is off already in that direction, and we still linger here on the banks of the Arno. The little excursion we made together is worthy of a passing word.

We left Florence in W——'s carriage, an excellent bachelor-like vehicle, on as cold a noon-tide as one often meets with in New York, even north of the highlands. These

Apennines, which form a magnificent backbone for Italy, give the country a great diversity of climate, serving as a wall to heat it in summer, and as repositories of snow to cool it in winter. We were closely curtained and had the glasses up, and went *ventre à terre* over the paved roads, and yet had great difficulty in keeping ourselves warm.

The first halt was at Pistoja, a town of some size, in which we amused ourselves for half-an-hour in looking at a church or two, as well as at some pictures. Taking a little refreshment, we proceeded at the old pace, and drove into the gate of Lucca, just as night had set in. Shivering with cold, for this little capital is in the heart of the mountains, we made our way into a room, and only began to recover the natural hue of our skins, when a dozen cones of the pine, well filled with resin, were in a bright blaze. These and a plentiful supply of faggots brought back the congealed vitality, whose current had almost frozen. A good supper and good beds reconciled us to life.

We were up betimes, and went forth to explore Lucca. The town stands on a plain, a mountain basin, and is walled in a semi-modern fashion. If good for nothing in the way of defence, the ramparts make an excellent promenade. We visited the churches and pictures as usual, and then took a fancy to examine the palace, a long, unornamented edifice in the heart of the place. The duke is travelling, and, pretty much as a matter of course, is out of his own dominions, which, though one of the most populous countries of Europe, possessing three hundred and thirty souls to the square mile, has not one hundred and fifty thousand people. When it is remembered that a large portion of even this small territory is mountain and nearly uninhabited gorges, you may form some notion of the manner in which the little plain itself is peopled. The town has only twenty-two thousand souls; but as we walked on the ramparts and overlooked the adjacent country, it seemed alive with peasants of both sexes, labouring in the fields. They resembled pigeons gleaning a stubble,

literally forming lines of twenty or thirty, working with hoes. Indeed, the agriculture was gardening.

Lucca was a republic down to the period of the French Revolution, about which time it was given to his sister Eliza by Napoleon, as a duchy. I believe the palace is owing to her taste, and to the expenditure of an Imperial princess. We found it Parisian in style and arrangement, and in these particulars, I thought, superior even to Windsor. Nature has fitted the French to excel in mantua-making, upholstery, and philosophy.

After passing the morning in this manner, we took flight for Pisa. These republics must have had warm neighbourhoods formerly, for the distance between the two towns is only a single relay. The respective plains are separated by a noble pile of the Apennines, a mountain that is isolated, and which serves admirably as a party-wall between the capitals. The first glimpse we had of Pisa was of its tower and domes, the houses and walls lying so low as scarcely to come into the view. There

was a line of respectable aqueduct, leading from the mountain, however, to give notice of the proximity of civilization. The country, too, was fertile and well cultivated, but much less so than that of Lucca.

Pisa is a place to be seen, for it was once of note, and has curious remains of its former power. There is a palace, and the Tuscan court is here at this moment, passing a few weeks in it every winter. The town, notwithstanding, is dull and half-depopulated, noble houses being to be had for prices almost nominal.

The chief interest of Pisa is concentrated in a single corner, where the cathedral, the baptistery, the Campo Santo, and the leaning tower are all to be found within a few feet of each other. They are all within the walls, as indeed is a good deal of vacant ground; both Florence and Pisa, like Rome, appearing to have shrunk from their ancient dimensions.

You probably know that it is a disputed point whether the tower, or *campanile*, was

built at its present inclination, or whether it sunk on one side from a defect in the foundations. I shall take side with those who espouse the former opinion. By looking at an engraving you will perceive that this tower is composed of seven distinct compartments, externally, each being ornamented with its own columns. Internally it is merely a circular flight of steps, that lead to the gallery of the bells. Now the four lowest of these compartments lean materially, the two next less, and the last is almost, if not absolutely perpendicular. I think these facts go to show that the tower was built in this form; for had it sunk when only half completed, it is scarcely probable that the artist would have persevered: he would have taken down the materials and laid the foundations anew. Then there is no crack, no dislocation of the columns, not the least derangement of the parts within or without, to denote a violent change of position. The principal reasons for supposing that it has sunk, since erected, are the manner in which

one side of the foundation appears to be buried, and the fact that there is an ancient painting which represents the tower as upright.

As for the first of these facts, it strikes me that an architect silly enough to erect such a monstrosity would be as likely to begin his folly at the bottom as anywhere else. The painting may be explained. It is a fresco picture of the town, in the cloisters of the Campo Santo, and no part of the tower is represented but the summit, which appears above the adjoining buildings. I have told you already that this summit is perpendicular, or so nearly so as to have that appearance when abstracted from the rest of the tower. Besides, the tower itself leans but one way, and taken in two positions, it of course presents nothing extraordinary. Now the view in the picture is precisely in one of these positions, or *en profile*. You will remember, moreover, that the bit of tower seen in the painting is but small, and that it is an accessory in which foreshortening would not be much attended to had the artist been equal to such an attempt: but, in fact, the whole work

is of no great merit, and the entire perspective is indifferent.

I am of opinion that this tower was built as it now stands, until a point was reached where the architect thought it necessary to vary the line, which, it would seem, he did twice before reaching the summit. Caprices of this sort are not unknown; most men, indeed, fancying it a greater achievement of genius to make a thing that is extravagant than a thing whose merit consists in its exquisite fitness. A thousand will exclaim at the manner in which cloth, or a bit of lace, is represented in a picture or a statue, to one who will fully feel the beauty and repose of the expression of either.

The effect of the leaning tower, when standing in the upper gallery, is what one might imagine. It requires a slight effort of reason to look down without a sensation of fear; for it is like looking over a precipice. The view is fine, and for the first time in twenty years I got a sight of the blue waters of the Mediterranean. We saw the island of Gorgona, and overlooked a sea of plain. Had the day been

finer, we should have enjoyed the prospect more.

The cathedral is a droll medley of beauty, and of a barbarous taste. The dome struck me as low and mean, and some of the details as good as others are bad. But these are subjects of which I say little, too many folios already existing on such matters. I liked the baptistery very much.

As for the Campo Santo, who has not heard of it? It is contained within cloisters, the monuments being under cover, and the space to contain the bodies is not larger than a considerable court in a palace. In this place one might pass weeks in agreeable but melancholy contemplation. In the baptistery we saw a priest by the font, muttering something, and drawing near, found he was baptizing a child. Religious rites, under establishments, get to be rather common-place.

There are few spots in Europe of superior interest to this corner of Pisa; and yet there is a little chapel on the quay, called *Santa Maria della Spina*, that is worthy to be here, the tra-

dition running that it is the repository of a thorn from the crown of the Saviour. It is a miniature edifice of marble, and one of the most grotesque little things I have ever seen, in its way; quite equal to the celebrated town-house of Louvain. The style is termed here *il Gotico Moresco*, to distinguish it from *il Tedesco*, or what is here called the German Gothic. There is a good deal of Moorish architecture in Tuscany, or that which approaches it, if not quite pure, the court of the Medici palace at Florence being in this Oriental style. I think it singularly beautiful in its place, especially for cloisters and courts. The chapel in question is of black and white marble,—a taste that suits its general quaintness, but which impairs the majesty of severer architecture.

After passing the night in Pisa, we galloped across the wide plain to Leghorn. The sea-air was grateful, even in winter, and I snuffed the odour of this delightful sea with a delight that was "redolent of joy and youth." We got into a very good inn kept by a Scotchman, and

soon exhausted the wonders of the place. It is not easy for one who has not been in Europe to appreciate the difference that exists between its capitals and its commercial towns. Leghorn is rather an interesting town, and has even a few respectable points of poetic interest; but it had an atmosphere of trade, that struck us forcibly on entering it. It has canals within the walls, is fortified, and has some very good streets.

We ordered dinner, and hurried off to the port. Here we feasted our eyes on the different picturesque brigs and peculiar barks of this poetical sea. Long years had gone by since I had seen the felucca, the polacre, the xebec and the sparranara, and all the other quaint-looking craft of the Mediterranean: for, whatever may be said of the utilitarian qualities of our own vessels, poetry has had no more to do with them than it has had to do with anything else in the land. I do not believe we are without poetic feeling as a people; but we are sadly deficient in the ordinary appliances of the art. As we strolled along the mole and quays,

we met several men from the Levant ; and an Algerine Rais was calmly smoking his *chibouque* on the deck of his polacre.

Observing the eagerness with which I surveyed these objects, our *laquais de place* declared, it was a pity we had not been in Leghorn ten days earlier, as we might then have found a ship worth seeing, the Delaware, American man-of-war. We sneered at this information, and asked him what a people like the Americans could produce that was worth examining ? "I thought so too, gentlemen," he answered ; "but the Delaware was the finest ship that has ever been at Leghorn, as every one admits." "Of course her crew were black ?" "Not so, signore: *I expected that too;* but they were all as white as we are:" which perhaps was not so literally true.

The only people in Europe who have a respectful opinion of the Americans are those who see their ships : and these are getting to entertain notions that are a little extravagant the wrong way.

Leghorn was the first sea-port that I had

entered since leaving Holland, and its delicious odours were inhaled with a delight that no language can describe. I had been living in an atmosphere of poetry for many months, and this was truly an atmosphere of life. The fragrance of the bales of merchandize, of the piles of oranges—of even the mud, saturated as it was with salt—to say nothing of the high seasoning of occasional breathings of tar and pitch, to me were pregnant "with odours of delight." Still I found that residences in European capitals, and among the Alps and Apennines, is creating a strong distaste for all the more common appliances of commerce. Leghorn seemed vulgar and mean, after Florence, with its pretty little court, its museums and its refinements; and the only things that interested us were the sea, the port, the picturesque vessels, the fragrance, and a cemetery for the Protestant dead.

The island of Gorgona was looming in the haze, a hummock of rock, and it is said there are days on which the mountains of Corsica are visible from the mole. There is also a

noble dark pile at no great distance from the town, which is, appropriately enough, called Monte Nero. Its side is garnished with country-houses, and there is a church near its summit that is in great repute among mariners, as a shrine at which offerings are to be made for deliveries from the casualties of the sea: I believe its name is that of Our Lady of the Storms. These Catholics have certainly got all the poetry of the religious.

We went to the Protestant cemetery, which contains many American graves, and among others that of Captain Gamble, who died here, in command of the Erie, about ten years ago. This gentleman, one of four brothers in the service, had been my messmate on Lake Ontario some twenty years before, and it was startling to find myself unexpectedly standing over his grave in the other hemisphere. On examining the monuments near, I was still more startled at reading the name of "Tobias Smollett" on one of them. He is known to have come to Italy to terminate his worldly career. The "Siste Viator" applies with force to those

who speak English, and who find themselves unexpectedly standing over such a grave!

We soon exhausted the sights of Leghorn and returned to Pisa, where we slept. The weather was intensely cold, and we sat shivering over a bad fire until it was time to retire. I would advise no consumptive person to come to Italy, in the expectation of finding a more genial climate than can be got in America. The West Indies offer many more suitable spots for the malady; and a man of science at Paris has told me that the temperature of St. Augustine is known to be more mild and equal than that of any other place in the world, of which there are authentic journals of the changes of weather. Every one here tells me that the patients usually come to die; a fact to which the Leghorn cemetery bears ample testimony. It were a worthy object for the government to push St. Augustine, if for no other purpose than to render it comfortable to invalids.

The next day we returned to Florence, by the great route, reaching the gates of the town

in time to dine. The weather had become more mild, and we were struck with the beauty of the peasant girls, many of whom were sitting in the sun, and a fair proportion of whom had pretensions to some of that pastoral prettiness of which the poets delight to speak. These were the first females of the class, however, that had the smallest claims to beauty, which it had been my good fortune to meet with in Europe, out of England. Hitherto I had seen occasional exceptions, but in this road we actually met with rural beauties in crowds. I attribute the circumstance to their employment; for most of them were plaiting straw for hats.

LETTER V.

Application for an Audience at the Court of Tuscany.—A grand Drawing-room at the Pitti Palace.—Transfer of the sovereignty of Tuscany.—The author presented to the Grand Duke and to the Princesses.—His Conversation with the Grand Duke.—Political Reflections.

A LITTLE circumstance that is scarce worth mentioning has drawn me from my privacy, and induced me to appear at the court of Tuscany. When the resolution to be presented, was taken, a letter was addressed to the great chamberlain, with a request to have an audience of the grand duke, and of the princesses of the family, of whom there are three of an age to have establishments; and I received an answer that I should be presented on the occasion of a festival that was at hand, when there was to be a grand drawing-room. Accordingly, the sword, and steel buttons, and lace were

early provided; for I was given to understand that these were indispensable paraphernalia. Were the thing to be done over again, I should ask permission to appear in the full dress of my own country: for if a Turk can be received in this manner, why not an American? My attire, however, was not much out of the ordinary way, being merely a black coat, breeches, and vest, with lace at the cuffs and frills, steel buttons and a sword, with a dress hat. Still, I make no doubt, had a proper representation been made, I might have been received precisely as one goes to the White House; for the rule is, that each person shall appear in the full dress of his own country.

As we have no minister in Italy, I escaped the necessity of offering an apparent slight; for in no ordinary circumstances would I be presented by an American minister: it is not his duty, and one can get along quite as well without him as with him. I did think of asking the minister of Russia to do me this favour, for he would have been the most natural substitute for one of our own; but, on reflection, I deter-

mined to put myself altogether in the hands of the regular officer of the court.

The great chamberlain, the Marchese Corsi, had directed me to be at the Pitti at an early hour in the evening, where I was to inquire for him. The King of England is lodged much less like a monarch than the Grand Duke of Tuscany, who inhabits a palace fit for an emperor, although it was originally constructed, or rather commenced, by a merchant. As every one is admitted to see its pictures, I had often been in the building; but this was the first occasion on which I had entered the regular reception-rooms.

Of course I was punctual, and on ascending the great stairs, I found them, the galleries, and the ante-chambers crowded with lackeys in the royal liveries. Beyond these, again, was a party of the noble guards, a sort of *gardes du corps;* and still farther in advance, was a room in which the young pages of honour, sons of the first houses of Tuscany, were amusing themselves after the fashion of their time of life, with certain practical jokes on each other. One

of these was the young Baron ——, the owner of our own palazzo, and, although just at the moment he was very busy in exercising his wit on one of his companions, he no sooner recognised me, than he good-naturedly abandoned his fun to come and offer his services. I told him I wished to find the Marchese Corsi, and he pointed to one of the chamberlains of the court as the person to whom I ought to apply.

I saw through the long vista of rooms, that a crowd was present, and that everybody was in high dress. The chamberlain to whom I applied was in scarlet, and seemed to be in waiting for stray courtiers like myself. As soon as I preferred my request to be conducted to Signor Corsi, he asked me, with a little point of manner, if I were an American. The answer was in the affirmative, of course, and, for a rarity, my national character appeared to be in my favour. This gentleman very obligingly led the way through two or three large rooms full of courtiers, and presented me to the grand chamberlain, who was in a small apartment that contained merely a dozen people. After

a short conversation, I was desired to wait a little, for the appearance of the royal family. On looking round, I perceived that my companions were the secretaries of the different legations, and as I knew several of them, we fell into discourse. I observed that my presence caused a little surprise, and apprehensive that it was my duty to retire to the crowd in the outer room, I took an opportunity to question an English acquaintance on the subject. From this gentleman I learned that my presence in this particular room was a little out of rule. He said this delicately, but with sufficient distinctness. The family was in an apartment still further removed from the crowd, where it was in the practice of receiving the heads of the different legations; and the subordinates, with the ministers of state, had their place in the little room in which we then were. My informant added, that several of his countrymen were among the courtiers, waiting to be presented. This information was no sooner obtained, than, supposing I had misunderstood M. Corsi, I withdrew.

In a minute, however, I was summoned back to the side of the great chamberlain, who told me that the grand duke was about to enter the room. I explained my error, by intimating that I had been led to suppose myself where I ought not to be. On this hint, the great chamberlain indirectly, but very politely, gave me to understand that *he* was master of the ceremonies at the court of Tuscany, and no one else. Of course I had no objection to make, and was resigned to my honour. But at this moment the Count Fossombrone, the first minister of state, a respectable old man of an excellent character, entered, and took his station near the door. The rest of us were ranged in a circle, the Marchese Corsi nearest to the premier, and I at his elbow.

You probably know that the Grand Duke of Tuscany is also an Austrian Archduke. The scale is so graduated, that I believe he ranks higher, as a cadet of the Imperial House, than as sovereign of this beautiful and respectable little state. At any rate, his usual style is that of His Imperial and Royal Highness, Leopold,

&c. &c. His sister and daughters are also styled Archduchesses; although the latter are as yet mere children.

Tuscany came into the possession of the House of Austria by an arrangement with France. At the death of John Gaston, the last of the Medici, in 1737, Louis XV. succeeded, as the descendant of Maria di Medici, the wife of Henry IV. About the same time, Francis, the reigning Duke of Lorraine, had married the heiress of the Hapsbourgs, and was elected Emperor of Germany. Lorraine lying within the Rhine, at a short distance from Paris, and since the conquest of Alsace actually *enclavé* by the French territory, it was very desirable to possess it. The death of John Gaston offered a favourable occasion, and the family of Lorraine, durably transferred to the thrones of Austria, consented to exchange its ancient states for those of Tuscany. As regards extent and richness of territory and population, France made a hard bargain; but high political considerations balanced the account. Tuscany was

remote, while the possession of Lorraine threw back the eastern and most vulnerable frontier of the kingdom at once to the Rhine. The marriage of Francis, moreover, would have left the future head of the House of Austria in occupation of a territory almost in the heart of France, without this arrangement, or a violent seizure. France stipulated that Tuscany should never be merged in Austria, as a state, however, but that it should be governed by a cadet of the family. Thus, when Joseph II. died without issue and was succeeded by his brother Leopold, then Grand Duke of Tuscany, the second son of the latter, Ferdinand, became sovereign of Tuscany. His son Leopold II. is the reigning duke; and, of course, he is a nephew of the emperor, and stands next in succession to the Imperial throne, after the two sons of the emperor, and before the Archdukes Charles, John, Regnier, Anthony, &c. &c. &c. Thus, though we are about to see the sovereign of Tuscany, it is an event by no means improbable that he may one day

become Emperor of Austria, as happened to his grandfather, and predecessor in the grand duchy.

I had hardly come to an understanding with the Signor Corsi, when the members of the family entered the little room in which we were ranged. The grand duke, a man of good stature and of an amiable countenance, came first. He was dressed in the uniform of an Austrian officer, or in a white coat and scarlet pantaloons, embroidered in gold, with military boots; and he wore the star and badge of the Golden Fleece, &c. He appeared to be about thirty.

On entering the room he addressed himself to Count Fossombrone, his minister, with whom he conversed a few minutes. He then turned with a look of inquiry to the Marchese Corsi, who made a sign to me, mentioned my name, and retired a few steps. The conversation lasted about five minutes, commencing with the usual questions as to my route, the length of time I had been in Florence, and civil expressions of satisfaction at seeing me at his court:

it was held in French. The grand duke left on my mind a strong impression of integrity of character; a quality far more to be prized than any other. One proof of the simplicity and justness of his mind was so striking, and so very different from what I had just escaped from in Paris, that it deserves to be recorded. "They tell me you are the author of many books," he said; "but as it has never been my good fortune to meet with them, I can say no more to you on the subject, than that I have heard them well spoken of by those who have." Here was a civil thing, united with an honesty that did equal credit to his tact and his truth. He left me with renewed expressions of his satisfaction at seeing me at his court, and then made the circuit of the secretaries and *attachés*.

While the grand duke was talking to me, the two grand duchesses, and the Archduchess Louisa, appeared in the room. I say, the grand duchesses; for there is a dowager as well as a reigning grand duchess. These ladies are sisters, and nieces of the King of Saxony, the eldest having married the late grand duke, not

long before his death, and being childless. The three followed each other, speaking in succession to those who had been previously addressed by the grand duke, and waiting until he had done. As our conversation had lasted a little longer than common, the three princesses were standing in a line behind the grand duke, when the latter left me. They were all in high court dresses, and had their trains borne by chamberlains.

Each of the princesses spoke to Count Fossombrone, in passing; and when the grand duke moved on, the reigning grand duchess approached me. There was no introduction in words, M. Corsi merely bowing towards me, to prevent any mistake. I dare say you think I now got some compliments on a work of fiction or two: no such thing—the subject was not alluded to by either of the princesses. They had treated letters with high distinction, by the especial notice they conferred; for, as I afterwards understood, the outer rooms were filled with men of rank waiting to be presented; but they avoided all allusion to the subject. With the two grand

duchesses I had, for the circumstances, a good deal of conversation, and one of them quite won my heart by the manner in which she alluded to my children, of whom, she had accidentally heard something. The archduchess said least; but the two grand duchesses were not only disposed to talk, but were everything that was amiable.

I had a droll specimen of the influence of favour on this occasion: for the family had no sooner passed on, than I had to receive nearly the whole diplomatic corps; the rays of royalty illuminating the secondary planets as the moon receives brilliancy from the sun.

The rest of the reception was conducted in the same mode, the grand duke going through all the rooms; but the ladies were less particular. The latter sat down to cards; where I observed that the refreshments they received were taken from the pages, and handed to them by the chamberlains.

Among the company was M. Eynard, the celebrated Swiss Hellenist. He wore the military jacket of the Swiss militia, with a Greek

cross on the sleeve. There were several Englishmen of rank present, in yeomanry uniforms; and one, Lord ——, told me his was that of a lieutenancy in the militia—an office he had *formerly* held. I mention these things, as so much misconception exists in America on the subject. The wisest way to go to court, here, would be to go in the full dress of Washington; but nothing is in better taste than to go in a militia uniform, if one happened to be entitled to wear it. The mistake is in flourishing these *quasi* military titles on the card, and in ordinary life, and in believing they are out of place on occasions like this. We get most of these things *dessus-dessous*, and fancy ourselves critically right, when we are singularly wrong. The well-known story of Napoleon and General —— *may* be true, but I greatly question it, as it is opposed to the spirit of European feeling; and it sounds very much like one of those inventions that float about American society, and are taken for gospel. I have known a dozen similar tales, in great vogue, which are certainly false. Ignorance of European life is so very

general in America, and the susceptibility to European opinion so very keen, that we are to make great allowances for what is rumoured in such matters.

After remaining some time in the drawing-room, I was stealing off; when I perceived the grand duke moving slowly towards me, followed by a large circle of courtiers. I got into an angle of the room that happened to be empty at the moment, and close to a door, thinking I should be passed unseen, as I did not like the appearance of pushing myself on his notice, after the extreme civility of the first reception. With such an intention, however, a worse position could not have been taken; for on entering the room, happening to glance his eye aside, the grand duke saw me, and turning short, I was literally cornered. Those who kept near the person of their sovereign, some fifty in all, formed a semicircle, extending from the outer side of the door across the room, and we were left alone, literally in the corner. At first, the grand duke had his back turned towards the rest of the company; but recollecting the awk-

wardness of the position, he changed it so as to face his subjects.

The conversation lasted, I should think, twenty minutes. His imperial highness was very curious as to America, and though there were great modesty and politeness, mingled with a singular and commendable sincerity, in his manner, he asked a hundred questions, while, of course, I did nothing but answer them. He inquired into the number and size of our towns, the habits of the people, and the general state of the country. Some of his notions were, as usual with most Europeans, vague and false; but, on the whole, he appeared to me to know more about us than most of even the learned in this hemisphere. His geographical attainments struck me as being very respectable; and what gave me more satisfaction than anything else, was the simple integrity apparent in all his sentiments.

The Osages had passed through Florence not long before, and had been fêted and fed, as at Paris. The grand duke inquired if I had seen them, and, on being answered in the affirma-

tive, he wished to know whether I believed them to be chiefs of importance in their tribe, and enquired their motive in coming to Europe. Now, it would not be agreeable for one who fancied he had seen a hero, to hear he had only seen a common man,—or who thought he was entertaining a saint, to discover that his attentions were lavished on a sinner. But catching some of the sincerity of the grand duke, I told him what I really thought: viz. that these savages could not well be principal chiefs, as the agent of our government would scarcely permit such to visit Europe; and that I believed the whole thing to have no connexion whatever with religious conversion, but to be merely a speculation of the Frenchman who managed the affair. This explanation was taken in good part, and I thought the grand duke had even anticipated some such reply. Princes so seldom get truth, that its novelty sometimes pleases them.

With one of his questions, which was personal to myself, I was both startled and amused. "*De quel pays êtes vous, vraiment?*" he asked, laying particular emphasis on the last word. Had

he not discovered too much knowledge of America previously, I might have suspected the old difficulty of colour was a stumbling-block; but as this was out of the question, suspicion was drawn another way. I believe the simple solution of this unusual question to be as follows:—Not long before, I had taken an opportunity to expose the motives and policy that had given rise to the systematic and enduring abuse of the English press on America. Any one might have accomplished this duty, for such it had actually become; but, favoured by circumstances, my own publication had made its way in Europe, where most American books would never have penetrated. As a matter of course, I had been blackguarded,—for the Anglo-Saxon race seems to take natural refuge in blackguarding when it can neither refute nor disprove. By way of weakening my testimony, a report had been industriously circulated that I was a renegado Englishman, and an honest indignation for unmerited national calumny was ingeniously imputed to personal disaffection and personal discontent. As half-a-dozen

of these rumours had fallen under my eyes in the public journals, I was at no loss to understand the drift of the grand duke's inquiry; and this the more especially, as he awaited the answer with evident curiosity. Determined to set him right on this subject, which if of no importance to the state of Tuscany, was of some importance to myself, I told him, with commendable particularity, I was a native of the small state of New Jersey, a territory lying between the two great states of Pennsylvania and New York; though a citizen of the latter from infancy. He wished to know if New Jersey was an original state, and whether my father had not been an Englishman. On this hint, I added, that my family had migrated to America, in 1679, from England certainly, but I had every reason to believe that I was the first member of it, in the direct line, who had been out of the country since; and, moreover, that Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York, were original states in the heart of America, and that more than a hundred men of my name and blood were at this moment among

their citizens. I believe this satisfied the grand duke: for so general is the disgust created by the English system of calumniating, that I have often had occasion to observe that the inhabitants of other countries are usually pleased to find the islanders put in the wrong.

It was not an easy matter to answer all the questions of this prince without misleading him, for etiquette prevented more than direct and brief replies. He was curious on the subject of luxury, and had many exaggerated notions concerning the magnificence of our nation. He seemed surprised when I told him we had no scenery to compare with that of the Mediterranean, and that nearly all of the American coast, in particular, was tame and uninteresting. — "But your lakes?" — "Are large, sir, without question; but so large as to resemble views of the ocean, and with coasts that are far from striking. We have many beautiful little lakes, it is true, but nothing to compare with those of Italy and Switzerland." — "Your rivers?" — "Are large and beautiful." — "And your mountains?" —

"Are much inferior to those of Tuscany, even."

But I cannot recall all that passed in this long conversation, of whose outline, rather than of its details, I have endeavoured to give you some idea. It terminated with the usual expressions of civility on the part of the grand duke, and the hope that Tuscany would prove an agreeable residence to us. Throughout the entire evening, I was under the impression that I had been treated with more than usual distinction, on account of my country; a source of distinction so very novel in Europe, that I deem it worthy of being recorded.

Like most of the Austrian family, Leopold II. is a man of kind heart and affections, and, I believe, a strictly honest prince. In many public acts it becomes necessary to separate the absolute sovereign from the individual; though the world is constantly guilty of the injustice of confounding them, while it is apt to overlook the divided responsibilities of aristocracies; — a quality that probably works more positive wrong than any other, since a large part of the crimes

of despotisms are merely excesses of those in places of trust. But Tuscany is a mildly governed country, and though it cannot be free from the vices of a *want* of publicity, it is free from their opposite — the vice of a too great publicity, or that of confounding the necessities of the community with the rights of individuals. The most insidious enemy of monarchy is aristocracy, which destroys while it pretends to support. Still, it is the natural goal of every nobility, and it has struck me there is a secret instinct which teaches this important truth to the sovereigns of our time. A country may be so far advanced as to wish for democracy; but this is the fact under few despotic governments; while all the nobles of Europe pine to become political, or true, as well as social aristocrats. In such a state of things, there is nothing violent in supposing that an absolute prince would regard an aristocrat with more distrust than he regards a democrat; for the polity of the former is an impossibility to him, while there is a constant and natural gravitation towards the latter. At all events, in

my own intercourse with princes and aristocrats, I think I have discovered in the former greater liberality, a more confirmed deference for the facts of a country and less theoretical ardour in favour of systems, a higher tone of philosophy with less apparent selfishness, than in the latter, considering the aristocrats as a body, and not regarding the occasional brilliant exceptions. As respects affability and absence of hauteur, the advantage is altogether with the prince, for it depends on a law of nature. I believe, that as we are farther removed from competition and jealousy, the greater the spirit of humanity and charity becomes.

LETTER VI.

Florence.—The Carnival.—A Masked Ball at the Hotel de France. —Group of Englishmen. — A Polish Dance.—The blending of Nations productive of the Advancement of Intelligence.—Public Opinion. — A Yankee mystified. — Prince Napoleon, son of the Count St. Leu.

THE carnival commenced early this year, and we have now been a month occupied with its harmless follies and gaieties. Our little capital has shone forth in new colours, and a round of masked balls, at the different legations, has been one of the principal sources of amusement. I was present at the one given by M. de Vitrolles, the minister of France, and shall describe it, in a few words, that you may form some idea of the manner in which these things are managed in Italy.

Although a mask is not indispensable, one is expected to wear some symbol of the folly of

the hour. I was told that a little silk cloak, that fell no lower than the elbows, lined with red, and furnished with tassels, was much used by the *juste milieu*, and was the very minimum of admissible costume. Provided with one of these, then, and otherwise dressed as usual, I presented myself among the crowd at the "*Hôtel de France.*"

Perhaps half the company was masked; the rest appearing in every sort of dress that fancy, usage, or caprice dictated. A town like Florence offers, on such an occasion, a greater variety of national costumes than one of the larger capitals; for the society is more than half composed of travellers, who come from all the countries of Christendom. The ball-room, as a matter of course, presented a brilliant *coup d'œil*, the more especially as all the women were in high fancy-dresses. There was the usual sprinkling of Greeks, Egyptians, Turks, and magnificos, with a large proportion of *bonâ fide* military uniforms. Among others, I saw an Englishman of my acquaintance, a Sir —— ——, in a coat of a cut that reminded one of the last century.

On inquiry, he told me that he had belonged to the guards in his youth, and that he never travelled without his old coat, which he found still very useful on occasions like the present. This is the sensible mode of getting along ; but our provincial sensitiveness makes us afraid of a militia uniform. Lord —— was also here, in his jacket, as a lieutenant of yeomanry. Again, in the course of the evening, a group of Englishmen collected in the centre of the room, and began to talk of their own country. They were all in uniforms, perhaps ten of them, and all belonged to what they called "the household brigade." The rest of the company shrugged their shoulders at this invasion of the English guards, which was not exactly in good taste; but a cluster of finer young men could not easily have been found. Several of them were six feet two or three, and among the Italians they looked like giants. It resembled a ring of our own Western boys, for a novelty, well dressed.

Soon after the company had assembled, a party appeared beautifully attired in the Polish costume, and danced a polonnaise. Both the

men and women wore boots, and the dresses were singularly striking. The movement of the dance was slow, and had some slight resemblance to that of a quadrille, though it was much more German and theatrical. The dancers were chiefly Italians; but the master of ceremonies was, I believe, a Pole.

After I had been some time in the room, I found I was the object of general attention. Every one turned round to look at me, until, suspecting something was wrong, I asked an acquaintance what could be the cause of so much and so unusual observation. "You have no cloak," he answered. Sure enough, the apology for a costume that had been thrown over my shoulders had fallen; and the want of it, in that assembly, was just as much a matter of surprise, as wearing it would have been under other circumstances.

"*Vive la folie, mon cher!*" cried the eloquent Baron ——, as he saw me pick up the fallen garment; "*il faut être aussi fol que le reste du monde, ce soir.*" This gentleman was enveloped in a white domino, without a mask; his fine

Neapolitan eye rolling over the scene, like one who enjoyed its gaiety. The blending of colours formed one of the attractions of the evening, the white dominos, in particular, greatly aiding the effect.

Looking over the company, I was led to speculate on the probable consequences of the extraordinary blending of nations, that is the consequence of the present condition of Europe. Fifty years since, none but the noble and rich travelled; and even of this class, not one in ten could fairly be said to have seen the world. At that time, the Alps were crossed only with difficulty, and at a heavy expense; and the roads and inns, generally, were so bad, that a journey from Paris to Rome was a serious undertaking, and a residence in either town involved a total change of habits for the inhabitant of the other. To-night a young Englishman of my acquaintance civilly asked me if he could do anything for me in London. "I'm going to take a run home for a month or six weeks," he added, "and shall be back before you go farther south." He thought little more of the journey

than we think of an excursion from New York to Washington. His father would have taken more time to prepare for such a journey, than the son will consume in making it.

One evident and beneficial effect of this commingling is certainly the general advancement of intelligence, the wearing down of prejudices, and the prevalence of a more philosophic spirit than of old. In a society where representatives from all the enlightened nations of the world are assembled, a man must be worse than a block if he do not acquire materials worth retaining; for no people is so civilized as to be perfect, and few so degraded as not to possess something worthy to be imparted to others.

It would be morally impossible for Europe to retrograde to the coarseness and open oppression that existed eighty years since, without the occurrence of some violent revolution: nor is it any longer easy for any particular community so far to isolate itself from the general sisterhood of states, as to retain many of the flagrant abuses that outrage the spirit of the age. There is still something to gain in these particulars,

beyond a doubt; but the progress is steadily onward, and twenty years more of peace and of continued intercourse will create a standard of moral civilization below which no people can fall and keep its place in the scale of nations. This is the right sort of public opinion; not one which invades the sacred precincts of private life, subjecting the sentiments and actions of individuals to the supervision of a neighbourhood, and giving birth to a wrong as great as any it removes,—but a controlling judgment that settles great principles, and throws its shield before the wronged and the feeble—a public opinion that benefits all without doing injustice to any. In this respect, Europe enjoys an immense advantage, from which we are almost entirely excluded by position. I think the effect very apparent, when one comes to analyze the modes of thinking of the two hemispheres; and in nothing is this effect more obvious than in the circumstance to which I have had occasion so often to allude in these letters, of the manner in which opinion precedes facts here, and facts precede opinion with us. This, after all, when

one has made a proper allowance for the influence of time on physical things, is the great distinctive feature between the people of most of Europe and the people of America.

We have the carnival in the streets as well as in the palaces, and most of all in the theatres. Balls are given nearly every night in some one of these public places, and I have been to two or three in masks, but always in domino. On several of these occasions I have attempted to mystify countrymen of our own; but Jonathan is usually as innocent of joking as he is of Hebrew. One evening I attempted a conversation with a tall Yankee, whom I had seen before, and succeeded in getting him a little aloof from the company; when he started up suddenly from his seat, and plunged into the crowd, leaving me delighted with the success of my awful communications. You will judge of my astonishment at hearing him tell a mutual friend next day of the abrupt manner in which he had escaped some impudent trull, who had endeavoured to get him beneath *a chandelier where the grease might fall on his*

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new coat—a plot of which I solemnly assert my innocence. My greasy friend was revenged by a party which got round me, and quizzed me at such a rate, that I took shelter from them, by putting my mask in my pocket, and going into the box of the Count St. Leu, who was not in mask. My tormentors, however, were not to be driven off so easily; for two of them followed me, keeping up a round of pleasantries about America and the Indians until I was glad to be quit of them. Later in the evening, one of these gentry met me in the crowd, and removing his mask a little, he showed me the face of Prince Napoleon Bonaparte, the eldest son of the count—a young man of great personal beauty and of singular cleverness. I masked again, and we took a seat apart, and began to discuss the usages of our respective countries. Both agreed that the world was little more than a masquerade, and my companion related the following anecdote, among other things, as a proof of the truth of our truisms.

You will remember that when King Louis

abdicated the throne of Holland, it was in favour of this very son, who was a titular monarch for the few days that intervened between the retirement of his father and the incorporation of the country with France. Though a mere boy, he was condemned to listen to many congratulatory addresses on his accession, his whole reign being distinguished by little else. One morning he was required to receive a deputation, just as he had prepared to discuss a quantity of *bons-bons*, on which he had set his heart, and of which he was particularly fond. While the courtier was dwelling on the virtues of the retired monarch, the weight of his loss (that of the *bons-bons*) oppressed him even to tears; and "you will judge of my surprise," he added, laughing, "at hearing all the courtiers bursting out in exclamations of delight *at the excellence of my heart*, when I expected nothing better than a severe rebuke for my babyism!" This, he said good-humouredly, was the first of his masquerades.

LETTER VII.

Trip to Genoa.—The Mail.—National vanity.—Massa.—Carrara.—Picturesque Road.—Romantic Villages.—Genoa.—The Strada Balbi.—The Sava Palace.—The Town, Scenery, and Port.—Environs.—Splendid Prospect.—Italian humour.

A SUDDEN call drew me from Florence during the carnival, and put me unexpectedly on the road to Paris. As I went alone, I took the mail, or *malle-poste;* a species of travelling in great request for those who are in a hurry. The mail is always attended by a guard, who accompanies it from one great town to another. His duty it is to see it properly delivered by the way, and to receive the contributions that offer on the route. The contractor is permitted to take one or two travellers in his carriage, which is purposely disposed so as to receive them.

I took my place accordingly as far as Genoa,

and we left Florence just as the sun was setting, with our lamps lighted. As we drove through the gate of Pisa, I observed a dragoon dashing along, on each side of us, and was then told that frequent robberies had rendered this escort necessary, until we got out of Lucca. There was a *contadino* inside, a respectable farmer, who was going a post or two down the Arno, and his eye glistened with delight as he regarded the dragoons. "Those are the boys, signore," he observed to me. "Nineteen of them put five hundred Neapolitans to flight here during the late wars." I wonder if there be a people on the globe that does not think itself the salt of the earth! Near Salins, last year, as we approached Switzerland, the postilion gravely pointed to a fort, which he affirmed had surrendered to five-and-twenty French, though garrisoned by two hundred Austrians. One can hear of such prodigies anywhere, though they are obstinately uncommon in practice, "even Providence," as Frederick expressed it, "being usually on the side of strong battalions."

We drove through Pisa at midnight, and reached Lucca before day. On the confines of this little territory we got some beautiful scenery, the road descending and climbing *à la Suisse*, offering occasional glimpses of the sea. Massa, the capital of the duchy of that name, was little more than a straggling village, seated on a hill-side, but picturesque and Italian; and Carrara, which aspires to the title of a principality, and which is so well known for its statuary marble, is not much more. Both the small states belong to the Duchess Dowager of Modena, and at her death will come under the government of the Duke of Modena, extending his possessions, which already join them, to the sea.

Here the Apennines approached the Mediterranean, until we soon saw their noble piles forming capes and headlands, impending over the blue element. It was altogether a wild and picturesque road, running among and over mountains, along the margin of torrents and through frowning gorges, with occasional openings toward the Mediterranean, that seemed

like the breaking away of clouds in winter. One of the most extraordinary features of the scenery was the manner in which grey villages were stuck like wasps' nests against the acclivities, resembling romantic structures placed in the most picturesque positions on purpose to produce an effect. Fifty of these dusky hamlets rose like bas-reliefs, or embossings, from the brown sides of the mountains; and some of them seemed perched on pinnacles that the foot of man could hardly scale. I had never before seen anything, in its way, half so wild and romantic as the rustic hamlets in the distance; though a few that we entered completely destroyed the charm on the near view.

At Spezzia an indentation of the coast brought our carriage-wheels fairly into the water; and after this we began to ascend. Just as night closed, we were buried in the mountains, and I composed myself to sleep. A jog from the *conducteur* awoke me, while we were driving through a gallery that equalled the boasted cuttings of the Simplon. Looking

out, I found we were on the coast again; and passing village after village in quick succession, we reached the gates of Genoa, amid a crowd of donkeys, and of market-people of both sexes, who profited by our arrival to enter the town.

You are to remember that I have promised nothing but the gleanings that are to be had after the harvests gathered by those who have gone before me. My task, therefore, is less one of minute and close description, than of desultory findings. This peculiarity may cause occasional meagreness of facts, and some apparent eccentricities of thought; for while I pretend to have gathered no more of what has been left by others than has come in my way, most of what I have actually seen is necessarily unrecorded, and on matters of opinion are commonly uttered when I have found reason to differ from the multitude.

At Genoa I remained two days. To the peculiar attractions of a port, and that too a port of the Mediterranean, were added the magnificence and glories of a capital. Every

one has read of the palaces of this town, the *Strada Balbi* probably having no equal, in its way, in any other European capital. It is not wide, is without side-walks, and but for the structures that line its two sides, would offer nothing remarkable. For more than a mile, however, it is a succession of edifices, that, in any other country but Italy, would be deemed fit for royalty. The Faubourg St. Germain has more large hotels, certainly; but the architecture is better here, and the material much superior to that in use in France. I should think that in the material point of gardens, the French capital has greatly the advantage. I entered several of these fine houses, which were generally remarkable for their marbles, staircases, and paintings. That of Sava is known all over Europe for a saloon that is covered with mirrors which reflect its half columns in a way to give it the air of a fairy palace. This room, when well lighted, must present an extraordinary sight; though it is rather small for its style of ornament. I have seen many rooms decorated in this mode, but

never one with the blended magnificence and simplicity that are to be observed here. Generally the effect has been that of a toy, — a sort of German prettiness, or German conceit; but there was none of this in the Sava palace. The master of this noble house is not *compos mentis*, though quiet and harmless. He was seated over a brazier, in an ante-chamber, in the company of the ladies, as I passed through; and he rose politely to return my bow, muttering some words of compliment. It may be that he has a simple satisfaction in this amusement, but it struck me painfully. The antics of the carnival were acting in this fine street.

I saw the palace of the King, and some of the pictures; that of the Feast of Cana in particular. But the town, the scenery, and the port most attracted me. Genoa lies at the base of a hill, around the head of a large cove, which has been converted into a fine harbour by means of two moles. One quarter of the town actually stands on low cliffs that are washed by the sea, which must sometimes throw its spray

into the streets. Its position consequently unites the several beauties of a gorgeous capital with all its works of art, the movement and bustle of a port, the view of a sea with passing ships and its varying aspects of calms and tempests, with a background of stupendous hills;—for at this point the Alps send out those grand accessories to their magnificence, the Apennines. The place is fortified, and the nature of the ground requiring that the adjacent hill should be included, the *enceinte* is large enough to contain all Paris. On the side of the cliffs and at the moles, are water batteries; the entire port is separated from the town by a high wall, which, while it does little more in the way of defence than protect the revenue, offers a peculiarly beautiful promenade, which overlooks the busy and picturesque little haven. Towards the land the works are more regular, and are intended for defence. The ascent is rapid after one is out of the streets; and the walls, flanked by forts, follow the line of a ridge, that is shaped like an irre-

gular triangle, which by falling off precipitously towards the country, supersedes the necessity of ditches.

I took a horse and made the circuit of the walls. The day was mild, but had passing clouds; and some of the views towards the interior were of an extraordinary character. A deep valley separated us from the district around the works; and there were several fine glimpses, in a sort of wild perspective, among the recesses of the mountains. I scarcely remember a scene of more peculiar wildness blended with beauty, than some of these glimpses offered; though the passing clouds and the season perhaps contributed to the effect. The inland views resembled some of the backgrounds of the pictures of Leonardo da Vinci. Indeed, it is only in Italy, and among its romantic heights with their castle-resembling village and towns, that one first gets an accurate notion of the models that the older masters painted.

Seaward, the prospect from the apex of the triangle was truly glorious. The day was mild,

and twenty sail were loitering along, quaint in their rig, as usual, and wallowing to the heavy ground-swell. Here I got almost a bird's-eye view of the town, port, and offing, with the noble range of coast southward, and a pile of purple mountains whose feet were lined with villages. I scarcely remember a day in Switzerland that was more fruitful of delight than this. As I descended to the highway, one of the royal equipages, a coach and six, with scarlet liveries, went by at a stately pace, followed by another with four, and several outriders. It added to the brilliancy of the foreground of the picture.

The large space between the town and the walls was nearly waste; though there stands a citadel, overlooking the former in a way to suggest the idea of offence, rather than of defence. The streets in general are Moorish in width, many of them positively not being more than eight or ten feet in breadth. I had one or two encounters with donkeys loaded with panniers, a passage being frequently quite a Scylla-and-Charybdis matter. As the houses are six or seven stories high, it is like walking in the fis-

sures of a mountain to walk in these streets. Of course carriages never attempt them. Still, Genoa has many fine avenues besides the Strada Balbi.

I saw more street devotion in Genoa than I had previously witnessed in Italy, men on their knees in the streets being rather an unusual sight in Florence. The gambols of the carnival were much as usual; though Italian humour is both richer and stronger than that of France. This is in favour of the people, and shows that they have had a place in the world; for I take it the French are wanting in this peculiar quality of the mind from the all-absorbing moral as well as political superiority of the court. The humour of France is nearly all military, as might be expected; and in this they are unequalled.

LETTER VIII.

The Maritime Alps. — A precocious region. — The Prince of Monaco's Country-house. — Picturesque Coast. — Magnificent Panoramas. — Villa Franca. — Nice. — Antibes. — Amphitheatre at Fréjus. — Draguinan. — Aix. — Marseilles. — Passage taken in an English Brig. — Abuse of America. — Leisurely Seamanship. — Corsica. — Opulence of English Nobility. — An unfavourable Breeze. — Moorings in the port of Leghorn.

I BELIEVE I fancied business called me to Paris, as much to make the passage of the Maritime Alps, as from any real necessity; for here I am back again at Florence, after an absence of less than three weeks, the journey unaccomplished.

I took the *malle-poste*, again, on the afternoon of the third day, and left Genoa for Nice, with no other companion than the *conducteur*. As we whirled round the cliff that forms the western point of the port, I looked back with longing eyes at *Genova la Superba*, and thought that it well deserved the title.

Now commenced one of the most extraordinary roads it was ever my good fortune to travel. It ran for a long distance on the very margin of the sea, the carriage literally rolling along the beach in places. I cannot recount the names of all the pretty little fishing and trading hamlets that we galloped through in this manner; but they were numberless, and now and then we had a town. The shore was fairly lined with them; while the mountains, inland, soon began to tower upward to an Alpine magnitude. This was the commencement of the Maritime Alps; and the following day we were to turn their flank along what is aptly enough termed the *corniche* road.

Imagination cannot portray bits of scenery more picturesque than some that offered on the beach. Wild ravines, down which broad and rapid torrents poured their contributions, opened towards the hills; and bridges of a singular construction and of great antiquity frequently spanned them in bold and imposing flights. Many of those wide arches were half ruined, adding the aid of association to their other

charms. As for the beach, it was principally of sand; and wherever a hamlet occurred, it was certain to be lined with boats and feluccas, some lying on their bilges, and others shored up on their keels, with perhaps a sail spread to dry. How some of these crafts, vessels of forty or fifty tons, in the absence of tides, were got there, or how they were to be got off again, exceeded my skill at conjecture; though the *conducteur* affirmed that they sailed upon the sands, and would sail off again when they wished to put to sea!

Here and there a prettily-modelled felucca was on the ways. Altogether, it was an extraordinary passage, differing entirely from any I had ever before made. Night overtook us a little before we reached Savona, and for several hours we travelled in darkness. We had left Noli before the day dawned; and when it came, it opened on an entirely different scene. The beach was deserted, — or rather, there was no longer a beach, but the coast had become rocky and broken. The land was heaving itself up in gigantic forms, and on our right appeared a

peak that bears the name of *Monte Finale.* It was the last summit of the Alps!

The huge background of mountains protects all this coast from the north winds, and the sun of a low latitude beating against it, joined to the bland airs of this miraculous sea, conspire to render all this region precocious. Even the palm was growing in one or two places; and, though only in the first days of March, we felt all the symptoms of a young spring. This harmony between the weather and the views contributed largely to my pleasures.

Although the coast had become so broken, we occasionally descended to the margin of the sea. At Ventimiglia we passed a torrent of some width; and this was a point that the King of Sardinia was fortifying extensively, as it completely covered one flank of his Italian possessions. Farther on, we passed a small town called Mentone, which is in the principality of Monaco. This little state lies *enclavé* in those of Sardinia, contains some six or eight thousand souls, and has passed into the possession of the French family of Valentinois. Why it was preserved through

the eventful period of the late wars, I cannot tell you; but three or four of these pigmy governments have shared its fate, let it be for good or for evil. Among them are Lichtenstein, St. Marino, Knyphausen, and Monaco. The last, however, is not strictly independent, but is under the protection of Sardinia, and is without foreign relations; or it is an independent and sovereign state *à la mode de nullification.*

A little distance from the town we passed a new building, erected by the prince for a country-house. It was not much larger than an American dwelling of the same sort, and, barring the Grecian monstrosities and the shingle palaces, not more respectable. The grounds were small and naked of trees, and altogether it was the most comfortless and unpretending abode of the sort I have seen in Europe. But the Prince of Monaco resides chiefly in France, cannot properly be considered royal, and, I dare say, values his French peerage as highly as his Italian states. We passed barracks that were said to contain an army of twenty men.

Soon after quitting Mentone, the road began to wind its way across the broad and naked breast of a huge mountain. This was, in truth, the point where we crossed the Maritime Alps, the rest of our mounting and descending being merely coquetting on their skirts. The town of Monaco appeared in the distance, seated on a low rocky promontory, with the sea laving one of its sides, and the other opening towards a pretty and secluded port. The whole of this coast is as picturesque and glorious, however, as the imagination can paint: and then the associations, which are Oriental, and sometimes even Scriptural, come in to throw a hue over all. I observed to-day, while we were traversing one of the heights or promontories of the coast, a polacre rolling at her anchor, while boats were carrying off to her oil and olives, from the spot where the latter had grown. To give you a still juster notion of the nature of this region, as I sat leaning back in the carriage this afternoon, the line of sight, by clearing the bottom of the carriage window, struck another vessel under her canvass, at the distance of half a

league from the shore. We might have been, at the moment, a thousand feet above the sea. Some of the panoramas, seen from these advanced eminences, were as magnificent as land and water could form; and this the more so from the hue of the Mediterranean, a tint that is eminently beautiful. Indeed, one who has seen no other sea but that which is visible from the American coast, can scarcely form a notion of the beauty of the ocean; for there the tint is a dull green, while in most other parts of the world it is a marine blue. The difference, I think, is owing to the shallowness of our own seas, and the depth of those of this hemisphere, —and, perhaps, also to the magnitude and number of the American rivers.

After climbing a league we reached the summit of the pass, which was a sort of shoulder of the range, and had a short distance of tolerably level route. From this elevation we caught a glimpse of a deep bay, with a town at its head called Villa Franca; and one of the most extraordinary of all the wasp-nest-looking villages I had yet seen presented itself. It literally

capped the apex of a cone, whose sides were so steep as to render ascending and descending a work of toil, and even of risk. I should think that a child that fell from the verge of the village must roll down two hundred feet. On this extraordinary pinnacle were perched some fifty or sixty houses built of stone, and resembling, as usual, one single and quaint edifice, from the manner in which they were compressed together. The *conducteur* deemed this village the most extraordinary thing on his route, and when I asked him what could have induced men to select such a position for a town, he answered, "The bears!" Protection was unquestionably the motive, and the village is probably very ancient. My companion thought there must be a well of great depth to furnish water, and he added, that the inhabitants were chiefly shepherds. It is necessary to see a landscape embellished by towns, convents, castles and churches, occupying sites like this, to form any accurate notion of the manner in which they render it quaint and remarkable.

We now began to descend, and for a long

distance the road wound down the breast of the mountain; though it was far from being remarkable as an Alpine pass. At length we reached a sort of basin on a level with the sea, which held the city of Nice; the county of that name lying on both sides of the Alps, and having been entered near Mentone.

A good supper and a bed were the first requisites; but, finding that the *malle-poste* did not proceed until the next afternoon, the following morning I set about examining the exterior of this celebrated refuge of the valetudinarian. The town is of some size and well-built, being divided into two parts by a high bit of table-land, or a low mountain, which is near the sea. I ascended this eminence, and got a bird's-eye view of its *entourage*. The port is small, and, I should think, in part artificial,—for it is like a dock, with a narrow entrance, from a coast that was a perfectly unbroken and regular curvature. The vessels lie as in a basin, though within a few yards of the open sea, from which they are separated by a low beach. There were a good many crafts in port, par-

taking of all the picturesque beauties of the polacre, latine-rig, felucca, Lombard, &c. &c. Among the rest, I was struck with a beautiful little schooner, that had so much of a ship-shape and knowing air about her, that I was just about to inquire whence she came, as an English ensign was set on board her. She was the yacht of an English naval captain, in which he is in the habit of making short excursions in this glorious sea. If there is a man on earth I envy, it is he! This craft was about thirty tons burthen, well found, and as neat as a marine's musket.

I walked across the port, and thence around the nearest headland, by a winding foot-path, and came out at the mouth of the harbour of Villa Franca, which, I was told, is a haven much used by the Sardinian men-of-war. To me the place seemed stagnant and deserted, and I returned to Nice by the same path. Strolling along the quays of the latter, I found more of those signs of Oriental life, which never fail to transport me in spirit to the regions of a fabulous antiquity. Among other things, I saw a

great number of large jars, intended to hold oil, which at once explained the manner in which the forty thieves were secreted, — a difficulty that always destroyed the illusion of the tale. Many of these jars were quite large enough to hold a man; though the attitude he would be compelled to assume might be none of the most agreeable for an ambuscade.

The orange-trees in this vicinity were covered with fruit; but the oranges themselves were sour and unpalatable. On the whole, the situation of Nice, which is almost entirely sheltered by mountains towards the north, must render the climate generally mild; and the proximity of the Mediterranean, no doubt, lends a blandness to the air. But, on the other hand, the sudden changes and cold blasts that certainly do occur among all mountains, cannot but make it a little precarious for consumptive people. If the scirocco, the greatest drawback of this region, blows home at this remote point, it will be an additional objection. I believe that the present condition of the world, and the great facilities for travelling, are bringing other places

more into notice, and Nice and Montpelier are in less request than formerly. Still, judging only from my own hasty and imperfect surveys of both, I should recommend Nice much sooner than Pisa.

After dinner, which, for the first time since I came to Europe, was made at a *table d'hôte* filled by men in trade,—a set that struck me as singularly professional on so long an abstinence from the luxury of the craft,—we left Nice for Antibes. The road ran along a level and fertile country, among orange-groves and olive-trees, until we reached a broad and straggling river called the Var, across which was thrown a rude, long, wooden bridge. Near the middle of this bridge was a gate that marked the frontier of France. At the opposite side of the river, we encountered a custom-house, where my luggage was examined. This was done in a very civil and *pro formâ* manner; and the *douceur* that was offered, as an acknowledgment of this favour, was declined. The circumstance deserves to be recorded.

It was dark when we reached Antibes, a

walled and garrisoned town, that occupies a low promontory which forms a pretty little haven. This place is known in the history of Napoleon, who landed in a meadow about a league from it, where he encamped for the night, in the celebrated expedition of 1815. An officer, with a few men, was sent to summon Antibes; but they were captured and confined in the town. The moments were too precious to be lost in discussing the matter, and the next day the Emperor moved on, leaving his agent, as the lawyers say, "to abide the event of the suit." The coast is generally low in this vicinity, and the brigs found good anchorage in an open roadstead. The descent was made at an unprotected point, and as we passed it next morning the *conducteur* showed me a tree under which Napoleon passed the night. It is now generally understood that his arrival was expected, and that the army was in a great measure prepared to receive him. "*Le Petit Caporal!*"

From Antibes to Cannes we were at no time far from the coast. The latter is a small town on the strand, and the harbour is little more

than a roadstead. As we approached Fréjus, the ruins of an ancient aqueduct were seen on the adjacent plain; and as this is a place of great antiquity, I could gladly have passed a few hours in it. But the *malle-poste* stops for nothing, except at designated points; not even to eat. To supply the place of a breakfast, however, I ran into a shop and bought a famous *biscuit de Savoie*, fancying that one ought to get a cake of such a name good so near the frontier of Savoy itself. At the first mouthful it crumbled into dust, and I discovered that the good woman of the shop had sold me her sign! Swallowing a little water at a fountain to wash away the *débris*, I ran ahead and examined an amphitheatre that is still standing in the skirts of the place. It is small, but far from being a total ruin, most of the seats being still to be traced quite distinctly. *Feste, Farina et Forche,** seems to be a political maxim as old as Italy itself; for wherever any traces of ancient Rome are to be found, one usually meets with a theatre or an amphitheatre.

* Festivals, bread and the gallows.

These noble traces of a remote civilization, in a retired place like this, had far more interest for me than the personal adventures of Napoleon.

At Fréjus we quitted the coast, for I was tied, for better for worse, to the letter-bags. Our road now lay across a hilly and far from inviting country to Draguinan. We had the cork and the olive for companions, the latter having suffered severely by the frosts of the previous winter. This was the commencement of the mountainous and retired region into which Napoleon plunged when he marched from Antibes, and in which he was lost to observers, for a few days, previously to his brilliant *coup de main* at Grenoble. Hitherto I had seen little of the real rusticity of France, for everything around Paris and on the great roads leading to it is conventional and *maniérée*. Draguinan proved to be literally *une ville de province*, but we got a reasonably good dinner.

From Draguinan to Aix it was, again, night-work; though we got to the latter place in time to enjoy a bed for a few hours. Aix is an ancient and a celebrated town, but it offers

little to interest a stranger. I passed a few hours in it, undecided whether to pursue the road to Paris, or to turn again towards the coast, where, I was given to understand, the object of my journey could be effected as well as in the capital. I fear a longing for the blue Mediterranean had its influence on the decision, for I had turned my back on it reluctantly; but about noon I got into a *diligence* and was on my way to Marseilles. I saw little of the beauty of Provence, for a less attractive region than that we drove through is seldom seen. Indeed, I feel persuaded that few countries offer less to the eye of the mere passer-by than France; the tastes of the people being little given to the picturesque, and, like the cookery, in which bad imitations of art mar the natural qualities of the viands, the provincial attempts to resemble Paris destroy the country without properly substituting the town. Nothing, in short, has the simplicity and nature of rural life until one gets as low as dirty *blouse* and *sabots*. Between coarseness and mannerism the chasm is wide indeed.

It was *Mardi Gras*, and as we drew near Marseilles, we met the population making the usual promenade on the highway; there being a sort of *corso* just without the town. There was the usual number of buffoons and patched faces, a good line of plain carriages, and very many pretty women. Indeed, the women of this town struck me as being much handsomer, generally, than those of the North of France.

I remained ten days at Marseilles, which is little besides a commercial town; but which, by its pretty port, beautiful coast, and its movement, offers enough to amuse one for a short time. The new town is built in a good style, with wide straight streets; but the old town, like all the places of the middle ages, is narrow, crowded, and dirty. The port is natural, but has all the appearance of an artificial dock, the gates excepted. The entrance does not exceed two hundred feet; and yet the basin within, which lies surrounded by the town, will contain five hundred sail,—vessels of any size, I believe, finding sufficient water. There is a good roadstead, almost a port, outside of this

again, and capital anchorage behind an island, on which stands the Lazaretto. As the quarantine laws of this sea are extremely rigid, it is something to enjoy moorings so secure and picturesque.

An Egyptian frigate of French construction, however, was lying in the port; and certes, if such cruisers are fobbed off on the Pasha, he may look forward to many more Navarinos; this being one of your regular wafer-sided and spider-kneed crafts.

I might write a long description of Marseilles—and the place merits it in its way; but such is not my cue,—which, you will always remember, is rather to deal with things that others have omitted. The time was spent in preparations to return to Florence, and, anxious to be afloat again on the Mediterranean, I looked out for something about to sail in that direction. Luckily a large English brig offered, and I took passage in her. This vessel was of four hundred tons burthen, had a crew of eighteen men, and was commanded by a half-pay naval officer, who was, in part, owner. She

had just been in the French transport service, in the expedition to Greece; as, indeed, had been the case with several American vessels in the port. One needs no better evidence than this fact, of the want of aptitude for the sea in the people of the country; the government not being able to transport a few thousand men across a small and tranquil sea, without drawing on the maritime enterprise and resources of foreigners, and, in our instance, of a people in the other hemisphere! One such circumstance is worth a folio on political economy, and, coupled with the fact that France lies between two seas, sufficiently proves that the bias of the national character is to *terra firma.*

One of the *mauvaises plaisanteries* of Jack is to sing songs at the expense of the soldiers. Our crew were heaving round on the capstan, accompanying their tramp with some pretty rude poetry, one line of which was, "A soldier's wife is a sailor's ——." You will judge of my surprise at hearing this well-known and pathetic sentiment suddenly travestied by the substitution of "Yankee's" for "soldier's," and "En-

glishman's" for "sailor's." A young Englishman on board felt ashamed of this coarse proof of national antipathy, and he endeavoured to explain it by saying, that the people of the brig had had a quarrel with the crew of an American which lay within hearing. It might have been so; but abuse of America flows so easily from the English tongue, that it was probably owing to the old grudge. I felt gratified, however, in the reflection that on board an American of the same size such coarseness and vulgarity in the people would not have been tolerated. I question if it would have been so in this brig, had the master been on board; but, at the moment, he was ashore; for though a good hater as respects America, he kept up a manly discipline.

We were towed out of the harbour some distance into the roads, when the brig was cast, with a light but fair wind from the north-west. This was the commencement of a *mistrail*,—a breeze that has much reputation in this part of France, on account of its freshness, as well as for its invigorating properties. We took

things leisurely, however, aboard the brig, and the night had passed before we were up with Toulon. The next morning, on turning out, I found a gallant breeze, and our vessel rolling through it as fast as a kettle bottom, a narrow spread of canvass and short masts would permit. Being in light ballast, we got along about seven knots, with the wind over the taffrail, while I am persuaded the brig had nine in her.

It is at all times a delicate matter to give a hint to a sea-officer; but I could not refrain making some inquiries about the light sails. The boom-irons were not on the yards, with a fair wind, and fifteen hours out! By dint of jokes, however, I got an order to have them put on. This was about ten in the forenoon. At meridian two were on, and then the order was countermanded. The master had methodically and deliberately taken the sun, and worked up his longitude; and, judging from his position, he thought we should reach Leghorn in the night, if we carried more sail. While he was at work with his quadrant, we had the peaks of the Maritime Alps, and those

of Corsica, both glittering with snow, in plain sight. The chart lay spread on the companion-way, and taking the bearings of the land by the eye, I guessed our position—if guess it might be called—within ten miles. Now all this an American master would have seen at a glance; and, I will engage, his quadrant would not have budged, though all his cloth would have been spread. Not so with our methodical mariner: he took counsel of his instruments, and the boom-irons were sent down again, in spite of several broad hints from me, that one might always lie-to after he had made his run, and that Gorgona would be a capital land-fall, if he was afraid of overrunning his reckoning, in the dark. It would not do, however; the irons were sent down, and instead of making more sail, we unbent a top-gallant-sail to mend it. The wind began to fall, and just at sunset we were up with the head of Corsica, with the topsails flapping against the masts. Belonging to another parish, I could only shrug my shoulders. It is too late in the day to deny the seamanship of the English, who, in some

particulars, are probably our betters; but the *go-ahead* properties of the Yankee, and the go-by-rule habits of the Englishman, are every day lessening the distance between the wealth and power of the two people.

The evening was pleasant, and as we gradually rolled past the land, I had a calm pleasure in looking at it. The northern extremity of the island is an attenuated bluff, low in comparison with the ice-covered mountains behind it, seemingly sterile, and with but few signs of habitations. A small rocky island forms an advanced work. Against this, and against the bluff itself, the sea was beating in sullen surge; and we were near enough to see its spray, and to note the marine birds hovering over their nests. The sun set while I was lost in the contemplation of this scene, and of the rocky and indented coasts beyond.

The master of the brig was a respectable man, and he endeavoured to compensate for his want of energy by entertaining me with the marvellous riches of the "nobility and gentry,"—a subject of which Englishmen of his class seldom

weary. He commenced with an account of the value of the plate of the Duke of Northumberland, who had just been appointed lord-lieutenant of Ireland, and who had paid a premium of 90,000*l.* to get it insured between London and Dublin. As the rate was a half per cent. this made the plate itself worth 1,800,000*l.*! But Englishmen of this class do not often stick at trifles on such a subject,—and yet they coolly accuse us of exaggerating! Another of the tales of my shipmate was an account of a Mr. W—— P——, who had got 500,000*l.* a year by his wife, and who was in the habit of losing whole streets in London on a game of cards. And yet this man, with all his imagination about guineas, never bethought him of the necessity of a ship's having boom-irons to make a passage, which is making money. We can talk more "dollar" than the English in a given time, I believe; but we have no parallel to their cool accumulations of tens of thousands a year in the way of incomes.

I got into my berth about nine, and waking up in the morning, I soon discovered that we were pitching instead of rolling. Going on

deck, I found the brig under double-reefed top-sails, on the wind, and Gorgona just visible in the haze on our weather-bow, the vessel heading to the eastward. In other words, the wind was blowing hard, directly in our teeth. The boom-irons would have carried us up to our port before this change occurred. An hour later, we passed an English brig running before it, and the master manifested a wish to follow her, as she was in ballast,—a sign that freights were scarce in Leghorn; but I encouraged him to stand in, with the assurance that Monte Neve would give timely notice of the dangers of the coast. By three the wind had moderated, so that we carried whole sail, and it hauled sufficiently to enable us to head up to the point where I thought the town lay; though it became so thick, we could not see half a league. Suddenly, the coast appeared; our master became alarmed, and hove-to his brig. At that moment, a boat came in sight, and a pilot soon jumped aboard of us. Had we stood on, we should have made the mole without fail. Instead of shortening sail, the pilot steered

straight for the mole-head, under both topsails. We weathered it by about fifty yards, and shot in astern of a tier of vessels that lay moored behind it. These vessels were Americans and English, and they rode by anchors ahead, while they were steadied by fasts run out to the mole. These fasts were slackened as we came sweeping in, and we ran over them, gradually losing our way by backing the main-topsail, and fetching up on the bights of the hawsers. I never witnessed bolder or better handling of a vessel of that size, for we came up to the mole-head with four knot way on us. Nothing was parted. A hawser was thrown upon the mole; a line or two, fastened to the ties, steadied us, and brought us head to wind; a kedge was carried off into the port, up to which we hauled, where we dropped a bower-anchor, and by hauling in on the stern-fasts we were moored. We could not take the outer berth, for it was occupied, and we thus became the fourth vessel in the tier. Altogether, I repeat, it was one of the prettiest things I ever witnessed, albeit it was performed by an Italian.

I fancy Columbus must have had some such men with him.

The public coaches of Italy are peculiar. If a sufficient number of passengers are ready, (in our case four sufficed,) a small carriage is sent off with them, drawn by post-horses. In this mode I got up to Florence next day, paying about five dollars for myself and man, a distance of sixty miles.

LETTER IX.

Spring at Florence. — Villas in the vicinity. — Prospects from the Belvederes. — A popular Tuscan air. — A fig after soup delicious. — Effect of Church Bells. — The *patois* of the Peasants. — A Funeral. — Stroll in a Carthusian Convent.

THE season soon became sufficiently advanced to give us a sight of an Italian spring. The birds of passage had flown, some north and some south, but all in quest of pleasure. The members of parliament had run up to London to take their seats, the peers excepted, for they can do their duty by proxy. As for the Russians and French, they had chiefly gone to Naples, or taken refuge in the mountains. The poor political exiles, of whom Florence has a large number, are still seen walking on the shady sides of the streets, but filled with lassi-

tude and *ennui*. The town is as hot as Philadelphia.

We left our palazzo within the walls, and went to a villa, called St. Illario, just without them. All the eminences around Florence are dotted with these retreats, many of which are large and princely. That we occupy is on a smaller scale; but it has numerous rooms, is near the town, and has many conveniences. Among other recommendations, it has two covered belvederes, where one can sit in the breeze and overlook the groves of olive-trees, with all the crowded objects of an Italian landscape.

But, to give you some idea of the region in which we dwell: The valley of the Arno, though sufficiently wide, and cultivated chiefly with the spade, is broken by many abrupt and irregular heights, the advanced spurs of the ranges of the Apennines that bound it. On nearly all of these eminences, stands a stone edifice topped by a belvedere; sometimes with, and sometimes without terraces; here and there a tree, and with olive-groves beneath. The whole country is intersected by narrow roads leading up the

heights; and these lanes usually run between high walls. They are commonly paved to prevent the wash of the rains, and nothing can be less attractive than the objects they present; though we find the shade of the walls beginning to be necessary as the season advances. To obtain a view, one is obliged to ascend to some one of the look-outs on the hills, of which there are a good many; though the rides and walks on the level land, that lies above and behind us, occasionally furnish us glorious glimpses. We are much in the habit of going to one of these places, which is rightly enough called *Bellosguardo*, for a better bird's-eye view of a town is not often had than this affords of Florence. In addition, we get the panorama of the valley and mountains, and the delicate lights and shades of the misty Apennines. Some of the latter I rank among the best things in their way that I have seen. These mountains are generally to be distinguished from the lower ranges of the Alps, or those whose elevation comes nearest to their own, by a softer and more sunny hue, which is often rendered dreamy

and indolent by the sleepy haziness of the atmosphere. Indeed, everything in these regions appears to invite to contemplation and repose at this particular season. There is an admixture of the savage and the refined in the ragged ravines of the hills, the villas, the polished town, the cultivated plain, the distant and chestnut-covered peaks, the costumes, the songs of the peasants, the Oriental olive, the monasteries and churches, that keeps the mind constantly attuned to poetry.

The songs of Tuscany are often remarkable. There is one air in particular that is heard on every key, used to all sorts of words, and is in the mouth of all the lower classes of both sexes. The soldier sings of war to it, the sailor of storms and seas, the gallant of his adventures, and the young girl of her love. The air is full of melody, a requisite of all popular music, while it has the science and finish of a high school, and is altogether superior to anything of the kind which you might fancy in use by the same classes of society at home. It is withal a little wild, and has a *la ral lal la* to'

it, that just suits the idea of heartiness, which is perhaps necessary, for the simplicity of such a thing may be hurt by too much sophistication.

I first heard this air in the town, at a particular hour every evening. On inquiry, I found it was a baker's boy singing it in the streets, as he dispensed his cakes. I often hear it, as I sit in my belvedere, rising from among the vines or olives, on different heights: sometimes it is sung in falsetto, sometimes in deep bass, and now and then in a rich contr'alto. Walking to Bellosguardo, the other day, I heard it in a vineyard in the latter key, and getting on a stone that overlooked the wall, I found it came from a beautiful young *contadina*, who was singing of love as she trimmed her vines: disturbed by my motions, she turned, blushed, laughed, hid her face, and ran among the leaves.

This is not the only music I get gratis. One of the narrow lanes separates my end of the house from the church of St. Illario and the dwelling of the priest. From the belvedere, which communicates with my own room, we

have frequent passages of civility across the lane with the good old *curato,* who discusses the weather and the state of the crops with unction. The old man has some excellent figs, and our cook having discovered it, lays his trees under contribution. And here I will record what I conceive to be the very perfection of epicurism, or rather of taste, in the matter of eating. A single fresh fig, as a corrective after the soup, I hold to be one of those sublime touches of art, that are oftener discovered by accident, than by the investigations of knowledge. I do not mean that I have even the equivocal merit of this accidental discovery, for I was told the secret, and I believe French ingenuity had got pretty near it already, in the way of the melons. But no melon is like a fig; nor will a French fig, certainly not a Paris fig, answer the purpose at all. It must be such a fig as one gets in Italy. At Paris you are always offered a glass of Madeira after the soup, the only one taken at table; but it is a pitiful substitute for the fig. After communicating this improvement on human happiness, let me add that

it is almost destructive of the pleasure derived from the first, to take a second. *One* small, green-coated, fresh fig, is the precise point of gastronomic felicity in this respect.

But the good *curato*, besides his figs, has a pair of uneasy bells in his church tower, which are exactly forty-three feet from my ears, and which invariably ring in pairs six or eight times daily. There are matins, noon-tide, angelus, vespers, and heaven knows what, regularly; to say nothing of extra-masses, christenings, funerals, and weddings. The effect of the bells is often delightful when heard in the distance, for they are ringing all over the valley and on the heights, morning, noon, and night; but these are too near. Still, I get, now and then, rare touches of the picturesque from this proximity to the church. The *contadini* assemble in their costumes beneath my belvedere, and I have an excellent opportunity of overlooking, and overhearing them too.

The *Lingua Toscana* applies rather to the people of the towns than to the rural population, I fancy; for these worthy peasants speak a

harsh *patois.* Walking in sight of the *duomo,* lately, with a gentleman of Florence, I desired him to put a question to a group of peasants; and I found that, while he was perfectly understood, he had great difficulty in understanding them. The aspirated words of Florence itself are well known to all who have been in Italy. We had a droll proof of this just before we left the town; for desiring my man to give our address to a shopkeeper, he gave, "Il Signor ——, *Hasa Rihasole, via del Hohomero.*" *

One of the most picturesque of our relations with the church arises from the funerals. Lounging in the clerical belvedere lately, we saw torches gleaming in a distant lane. Presently the sounds of the funeral song reached us; and these gradually deepened, until we had the imposing and solemn chant for the dead, echoing between our own walls, as if in the nave of a church. It is necessary to witness such a scene to appreciate its beauty, on a still and dark night, beneath an Italian sky.

* *Casa Ricasoli, via del Cocomero.* The aspirations are guttural, and have a touch of the Moresco-Spanish about them.

In one of the dreamy walks that I take in company with a Florentine, I strolled near a league along the road to Rome. The country is broken; the road winding among naked and abrupt hills, that constantly remind me of the scenery that one usually finds attached to subjects painted from Holy Writ. On a small bit of table-land, that rises in one of the valleys, is a Carthusian convent; and finding ourselves beneath its walls, my companion proposed entering.

The ascent was easy, and the outer gate open. We saw no one, but, following a carriage way that resembled the approach to an ancient castle, we soon reached the door that communicates with the cloisters. Here we accidentally met with a lay brother, who amused himself with cooking for the worthy fathers, and our application for admission was favourably, but silently received. The place was the image of solitude and silence; not a soul besides the lay brother was visible, and even he soon disappeared.

You may imagine the effect of strolling

through vast, tenantless, echoing, monastic cloisters, corridors and halls, on a sleepy Italian day, grateful for the shade and coolness, but wondering for whom these vast edifices were constructed. We positively entered, remained an hour, and left this structure without seeing a soul but the lay brother. The gates were open, apparently, for all who chose to enter; the chapel, sacristy, and cloisters were all accessible, not a door or a gate requiring the hand, and yet no one was visible. We departed as we had come; and the only evidence we had that there was a fraternity within, was to be found in a list of the fathers who were to perform certain masses, which was suspended in the chapel, and on which the priests were all designated by the Latin abbreviation *Dom.* or *Dominus.* As we returned along the highway, however, a Carthusian, dressed in his white robe, was seen mending a pen at a window of his small tenement: for each father has a tiny house to himself, with a garden and yard; the rules requiring that they shall live separately, and deny them-

selves, as much as may be, the comforts and solace of speech. These habitations form a court, all opening on the cloisters, of which they compose, in fact, the several sides. A covered gallery makes the usual means of intercourse within, while the distinct character of the structures is only apparent from without. The gardens lie between the small houses, or apartments.

LETTER X.

The Florentine Fête. — Chariot-races.—Horse-race.—Fête on the Arno. — The Comte St. Leu. — The Bonaparte Family.—Fire-works and Illuminations. — Illuminations in Paris. —The Corpus Domini. — Anecdotes of the knavery of Florentine Domestics.

THE great Florentine fête was celebrated a short time since. One of the ceremonies is so peculiar, that it may amuse you to have a short account of it. There are several considerable squares in the town, but the largest is that of Santa Maria Novella. At the festival of St. John, who is the patron saint of the city, an imitation of the ancient chariot-races is held in this square, which affords the most space. The games are called the *corsi dei cocchi*. There are two small obelisks on opposite extremities of the square, and the temporary

circus is constructed by their means. A cord is stretched from one to the other; a sort of amphitheatre is formed by scaffoldings around the whole, the royal and diplomatic boxes being prepared near the goal. As there is much scenic painting, a good parade of guards both horse and foot, a well-dressed population, and a background of balconies garnished by tapestry and fine women, to say nothing of roofs and chimneys, the general effect is quite imposing.

The falling off is in the chariots. The ancient vehicle was small and had but two wheels; whereas these were large and clumsy, had four wheels, and unusually long and straggling perches, — an invention to keep them from upsetting. In other respects the form was preserved, and the charioteers were in costume.

Four chariots, to use the modern language, entered for the race. The start was pretty fair, and the distance twice round the obelisks. If you ask me for the effect, I shall tell you that, apart from the appliances,—such as the court,

the guards, the spectators and the dresses, and perhaps I might add the turns, — one may witness the same any fine evening in New York, between two drunken Irish cartmen who are on their way home. There was certainly a little skill manifested at the turns, and it was easy to see that betting should have been on the outside chariot; for those nearer to the obelisks were obliged to go considerably beyond them before they could come round, while the one farthest from the poles just cleared them. This outside chariot won the race, the charioteer having the sagacity not to make his push before the last turn.

After the chariot-races, we had the *corso dei barberi,* or a race between barbs. The horses were without riders, and the track was the longest street of the town. To this amusement every one who could went in a carriage, and the *corso* of vehicles was much the most interesting part of the exhibition. Two lines are made, and the coaches move in opposite directions through the same street, on a walk. Of course, everybody sees everybody,— and pretty often

the somebodies see nobodies, for the mania to make one on these occasions is so strong, that half the artisans are abroad in carriages, as well as their betters. The royal equipages moved in the line, the same as that of the milliner. When we were well tired of looking at each other, the grand duke went into a gallery prepared for him, and the race was run. The latter does not merit a syllable; but so strong is the rage for sporting, that I heard some Englishmen betting on the winner.

But the amusements of the evening were really fine. They consisted of fireworks and illuminations, besides an odd scene on the river. It is only for a few of the summer months that the "Silver Arno" deserves its reputation; for I scarcely know a more turbid or dingy stream during the period of high water. Indeed, it brings down with it from the mountains so much yellow earth, that "Golden Arno" would better express its tint. But, at this season, it is placid and silvery. Care has been taken to make it a river all the year round, in the town at least, by raising a dam just at the suburbs,

which causes the water to fill the bed between the quays even in the dry months. Below this dam, it would be possible for an active man, aided by a leaping-staff, to jump across the channel. This is the common character of the Italian rivers, which, fed by the mountains, are turbulent torrents in the winter, and ribands of water in the hot months. Many are absolutely dry in mid-summer.

We were kindly invited to witness the fête on the Arno, from the palace of the Comte de St. Leu, the windows of which overlook the river. The party was small, but it contained several members of the Bonaparte family. Among others was the Comtesse de Survilliers, or, a name she is better known by, *la Reine Julie;* and that fine young man the Prince Napoleon, with his wife, the Princess Charlotte, so well known in America. The Prince and Princess of Musignano, with their children, made up the family party.

I believe I have not spoken to you of the Comte de St. Leu. He is one of the handsomest men of his age I have ever met with;

but it is the beauty of expresssion more than of features, though the latter are noble and regular. I can scarcely recall a more winning countenance; and his manner, though calm and dignified, is kind and unpretending. I should think his stature materially above that of Napoleon, though he is not of more than the middle height, and his figure is compact and square. The Comte de Survilliers is short, inclining to fat, and, though rather handsome, particularly as to expression, is not by any means so striking in appearance as his brother. The Prince of Canino (Lucien) is taller than either, thin, and has a decided Italian countenance, one that is shrewd, quick, and animated. The Prince de Montfort (Jerome) is short and slight, and resembles his brother Lucien more than the others. He is said to have most of the expression of Napoleon; but I should think, judging from the busts and likenesses, that Louis has most of the noble outline of the Emperor. The whole family, so far as I have known them, are certainly very intellectual and well-informed. The Comte de St. Leu

lives here in a good style; having a fine villa, where I dined lately, and this palace in the town, which is altogether suited to his rank and past life. He is styled "your majesty" by those around him, as was the Countess of Survilliers; and a little, though not much, of the etiquette of royalty is maintained in his intercourse with others.*

As for the fête, it consisted of a display of boats, with a multitude of coloured paper lanterns. The former were filled with company, and as they floated about, with their lights and music, they made both a singular and a pleas-

* Joseph has taken the title of Survilliers from a small village on the estate of Morfontaine, which was once his property. Louis gets that of St. Leu also from an estate. His wife, Hortense, is styled the *Duchess* of St. Leu, while he is called the Count. Lucien has been created Prince of Canino, by the Pope; and his eldest son, Charles, has obtained the title of Prince of Musignano, in the same manner. Jerome has been created Prince of Montfort, by his brother-in-law, the King of Bavaria. Joseph has no son, but two daughters, — the Princess Musignano, and the Princess Charlotte, the widow of her cousin Napoleon, the eldest son of Louis. Lucien has many children, by different wives. Of these the writer has seen the Prince of Musignano, the Princess Hercolani, the Princess Gabrielli, Lady Dudley Stuart, and Mrs. Bonaparte Wyse. Jerome has several children, — one by Miss Patterson, and the others by the Princess of Wurtemberg. The family is generally distinguished for abilities.

ing exhibition. There were extremely fine fireworks on one of the bridges, which terminated the amusements. One sees the influences of climate in the Italian fireworks generally, which are brilliant beyond comparison. On returning to the villa St. Illario, we found that the dome of the cathedral was illuminated; and you may judge of the effect produced by showing the outlines of so noble a piece of architecture at night, by the aid of artificial and well-disposed lights. It looked like a line-engraving of fire.

Notwithstanding the constant practice of men, one is constantly surprised at the igno-

Madame Mère was a slight attenuated old lady, with little remains of beauty, when seen by the writer, (the winter of 1829–30,) except fine black eyes. It may be true that she had the talents of the race; but, in several interviews, she did not manifest it. A good mother, and, under her peculiar circumstances, an energetic one, she certainly was; but, beyond this, it is probable her reputation was factitious. She possessed a bust of her husband that was strictly Bonapartean, not one of her sons bearing any material resemblance to herself. In any ordinary situation she would have passed for a respectable country lady,—one who came so lately into the great world as not to have acquired its usages, or its appearance. Her French was Italian, and her Italian far from good. She was quiet, simple, and totally without pretension, however,—in short, *motherly*.

rance of the commonest laws of philosophy that is betrayed on such occasions. I have often seen the gardens of the Tuileries illuminated, when the torches have been placed on the pedestals of the statues, but in plain view; the eye necessarily taking in the flame, to the exclusion of all the minor light. Were these torches concealed in a way to exclude them from the view, while their rays fell on the statuary,—a thing easily enough done,—the effect would be infinitely more agreeable, though perhaps less vulgarly flaring. I remember to have once beheld a drop scene, at a theatre, formed of mirrors. A flood of light was on and near the stage, and, as a matter of course, the audience, instead of seeing itself when the curtain fell, as was the intention, had a glorious view of the reflection of a thousand lamps and candles! Had the lights been so disposed in the boxes, as to illuminate the audience, while they were not seen from the stage, the desired effect would have been produced. Franklin, speaking of some of the coarse contrivances of French industry, pithily remarks, that "a re-

spectable *instinct* would be better than such a *reason!*"*

Still, the illuminations of architecture are usually good; and I remember one particular thing at Paris, that is quite unrivalled in its way. The Hotel of the Legion of Honour is the ancient Hôtel de Salmes, of which Jefferson speaks so much in praise, in his letters. It is a low building, though a very pretty one; and on the occasion of the great fêtes it is the practice to raise a tall spar from the roof, and to hoist at it an imitation of the star of the order, formed by coloured lamps. This star, seen on a dark night, shining, as it were, in the heavens, is, in its way, the prettiest thing I know.

We have also had the Corpus Domini, which

* On a particular occasion the writer was invited to take a seat *with the critics*, in the Park Theatre. As an interlude, two dancers exhibited, one in front of a large gilded frame that had gauze in it, and the other behind it; the aim being to produce the effect of reflection. Both backs and both faces being exhibited at the same time; the writer, in his capacity of critic, felt himself bound to hiss; whereupon he was himself incontinently hissed down. What! tell a New York corps of critics, that a man looking into a glass did not see the back of his own head! The writer merited his castigation, and seizes this occasion to admit how far he was behind the Manhattanese philosophy.

is the great Catholic fête of the year. The royal family walked in the procession, as usual; and there was a parade of the Knights of St. Stephen, in their robes,—an order of chivalry that, I believe, had some connexion with the suppression of the piracies of the barbarians from Africa.

The heat in July became intense, and we began to think of quitting Florence, where we had then been nearly nine months. I found the sun intolerable out of the shade; and the hills, which render the valley cold in winter, have the effect of converting it into an oven in the summer. Accordingly, I announced an intention to depart, and soon had occasion to remark that birds of passage like ourselves have little hold on those we employ beyond their gains. Two of our Florentine domestics conducted themselves in such a manner, as soon as they ascertained the day we were to quit the place, that I was compelled to discharge them; and, as this occurred on the third day of their respective months, both demanded an entire month's wages! This, you will perceive, was

just doubly their time. I resisted, and gained both my causes; and it is to be hoped that these people are the wiser for their defeat.

A little occurrence that took place soon after our arrival in Florence is worthy to be related, as it may serve to put other Americans on their guard, and to let you understand the nature of European intrigues. We commenced housekeeping with a man-cook, a housemaid, and two footmen, with the Swiss maid whom we brought with us. One of the footmen was discharged for drunkenness, within a fortnight, and I did not think it worth while to fill his place. The other proved an excellent servant, but a great scoundrel. It was not long before A—— complained to me of the bills of the cook, which, on examination, turned out to be about double what they were at Paris, though Florence has a reputation for cheapness. The housemaid, who was a Lucchese woman, offered her services, and the man being discharged, she was promoted to the kitchen, and her place was otherwise filled. Her name was Bettina.

About this time, a poor Neapolitan, who had fallen under the notice of A—— just before her confinement, came to return her thanks for certain little comforts she had received. "You got the money I sent you?" asked A——. "Si, signora." — "How much?" — "Three pauls, each time, signora."—Now these three pauls should have been ten pauls, or a francescone each time, and Bettina had been the messenger. On demanding an explanation, the newly-made cook admitted the fraud, giving as a reason for keeping back seven-tenths of the money, that she thought it was too much for the Neapolitan. Notwithstanding this flagrant dereliction, there was something so *naïf* in her confessions, that the woman was not discharged. But some dissatisfaction caused A—— to change the milkman. A day or two after this change, the milk for the coffee was found to be turned. Bettina was sent for, and she attributed it to the bad milk of the new milkman. When she went out, Luigi the footman quietly observed that he happened to have a little of the milk put away cold for the tea, and by

setting it before the fire in the breakfast-room, we might soon ascertain whether it was really bad or not. The experiment was made, and the milk proved to be good. Bettina was again examined, and on my threatening to take her to the police, she confessed that the old milkman had bribed her to put vinegar in the new milk. Of course she was now discharged.

As Luigi had hitherto behaved perfectly well, and had gained a reputation by his expedient, his counsel was attended to, and he was permitted, to put a friend of his own into the kitchen. The explanation of the whole is as follows:—The man-cook, though *out of reason* a rogue, was got rid of by a combination between Luigi and Bettina; Bettina next lost her place, by the management of Luigi, who reaped the advantage of his intrigues, as I afterwards learned, to the tune of about two hundred francesconi, beyond his wages. When he obtained his discharge, he actually had the audacity to chase my little son with a carving-knife, threat-

ening to cut his throat. He was paid his wages regularly every month, and towards the close of the time half-monthly, at his own request,—an expedient to prevent stoppages, as I subsequently found, on account of his frauds, —and I owed him a dollar when he was sent away. This he refused, claiming ten; and before the cause was decided, he claimed his entire wages for the whole nine months, affirming I had paid him nothing! In other respects he proved to be a thorough villain.

I do not tell you this as a specimen of Tuscan or Italian character, but as a proof of the impositions to which strangers are liable. After an experience of nine months, I am disposed to think well of the Italians, who seem a kind, and who certainly are a clever people; but the great throng of strangers in these towns loosens the ordinary social ties, by releasing the evil-disposed from many of the usual responsibilities. It may be taken as a general rule, I think, that travellers, unless greatly favoured by circumstances, see the

worst portion of every country; the better classes, and the well-disposed, waiting to be sought, while those of the opposite character must seek acquaintances and connexions where they are least known, and where it is easiest to practise their deceptions.

LETTER XI.

Audience of leave with the Grand Duke.—Journey to Leghorn.—Commercial Towns and Capitals.—Warehouse for Statuary.—The Port.—Voyage to Naples in a Genoese Felucca.—Elba.—A Mediterranean Quarantine.—Porto Ferrajo.—Napoleon and his House.—A Tarantula.—Island of Troas.—Cività Vecchia.—A lovely night scene off the Campagna.—The Pontine Marshes.—Gulf of Gaeta.—Bay of Naples.

THE time for quitting Florence having arrived, I wrote to ask an audience of leave of the royal family. The answer was favourable, the grand duke naming the following morning at the Pitti, and the grand duchess an hour a little later at the Poggio Imperiale, a palace just without the walls, and in the immediate vicinity of St. Illario.

Ten was the hour at which I presented myself at the Pitti, in an ordinary morning-dress, wearing shoes instead of boots. I was shown into an ante-chamber, where I was desired to take a seat. A servant soon after passed

through the room with a salver, bearing a chocolate-cup and a bit of toast,—a proof that his imperial highness had just been making a light breakfast. I was then told that the grand duke would receive me.

The door opened on a large room, shaped like a parallelogram, which had the appearance of a private library, or cabinet. There were tables, books, maps, drawings, and all the appliances of work. The library of the palace, however, is in another part of the edifice, and contains many thousand volumes, among which are some that are very precious, and their disposition is one of the most convenient, though not the most imposing as to show, of any library I know.

The grand duke was standing alone, at the upper end of a long table that was covered by some drawings and plans of the *Maremme*, a part of his territories in reclaiming which he is said to be just now much occupied. As I entered, he advanced and gave me a very civil reception. I paid my compliments, and made an offering of a book which I had

caused to be printed in Florence. This he accepted with great politeness; and then he told me, in the simplest manner, that "his wife" was so ill, she could not see me that morning. I had a book for her imperial highness also, and he said it might be left at the Poggio Imperiale.

As soon as these little matters were disposed of, the grand duke walked to a small round table, in a corner, near which stood two chairs, and, requesting me to take one, he seated himself in the other, when he began a conversation that lasted near an hour. The prince was, as before, very curious on the subject of America, going over again some of the old topics. He spoke of Washington with great respect, and evidently felt no hostility to him on account of his political career. Indeed, I could not trace in the conversation of the prince the slightest evidence of a harsh feeling, distrust, or jealousy towards America; but, on the other hand, I thought he was disposed to view us kindly, —a thing so unusual among political men in Europe as to be worthy of mention. He left

on my mind, at this interview, the same impression of simplicity and integrity of feeling as at the other.

He observed that fewer Americans travelled now than formerly, he believed. So far from this, I told him, the number had greatly increased within the last few years. "I used to see a good many," he answered, "but now I see but few." I was obliged to tell him, what is the truth,—that most of those who came to Europe knew little of courts, that they did not give themselves time to see more than the commoner sights, and that they were but indifferent courtiers. He spoke highly of our ships, several of which he had seen at Leghorn, and on board of one or two of which he had actually been.

I found him better informed than usual on the subject of our history; though, of course, many of his notions had the usual European vagueness. He seemed aware, for instance, of the great difficulty with which we had to contend in the revolution, for the want of the commonest munitions of war, such as arms

and powder. He related an anecdote of Washington connected with this subject, with a feeling and spirit that showed his sympathies were on the right side of that great question, on whichever side his policy might have been.

We had some conversation on the subject of the discovery of America, and I took the occasion to compliment him on there having been a Florentine concerned in that great enterprise; * but he did not seem disposed to rob Columbus of any glory on account of his own countryman, though he admitted that the circumstance in a degree connected his own town with the event.

At length he rose, and I took my leave of him, after thanking him for the facilities that had been afforded me in Tuscany. When we separated, he went quietly to his maps; and as I turned at the door to make a parting salute, I found his eyes on the paper, as if he expected no such ceremony.

Two or three days from this interview, we got into our carriages, after dinner, and went

* Americus Vesputius.

down the valley of the Arno at night, to avoid the intense heat of the days, which, Americans as we were, completely overcame us all. We reached the gates of Pisa just as the sun rose, and stopped a few hours to see the curiosities.

By twelve we were completely melted with the heat, and were glad to get into our comfortable seats in the carriages again: I say, carriages, for I had hired an extra conveyance at Florence, our little flock having increased too much in size, though not in numbers, to be conveniently put into one, as formerly.

We were all in our corners, half sleeping, half waking, when, about five miles from Leghorn, the whole party revived as suddenly as people awake from a doze. We had passed into the current of the sea air, and it acted on our spirits like a bath. I have known these veins of invigorating humidity drawn along the coast almost as accurately as the sands, so that one did not feel them two hundred feet from the water; but on this occasion we met the salt air at least a mile from the sea, though I never knew the effect greater or more sudden. Even

the horses appeared to feel it, for they began to trot merrily, and soon brought us to the door of the Locanda San Marco.

The honest Scotchman who keeps this inn gave us a large airy apartment, whose windows overlook both the sea and the mountains; two objects at which I never tire of gazing. As for the rest of the party, to whom the Mediterranean was entirely new, they had eyes for nothing else; and really, for those who had now passed years excluded from any sea finer than the North Sea, the bright glittering blue expanse was an object to be gazed at. To this was to be added the luxury of Italian rooms at the commencement of August; and, taking all together, I do not remember a happier party than we were for the two or three days we remained in this inn.

I have frequently spoken of the difference between commercial towns and capitals; a distinction that you, who never saw any other than towns of the latter class, will not readily comprehend, but which it is essential to know in order to understand Europe. I had the same

embarrassment on first coming to this hemisphere, for it is quite common here to speak of our towns as being *purely commercial.* A short experience, however, has shown me so much, that there is nothing I now perceive sooner, or which strikes me with greater force, than the peculiarities of these places that are entirely devoted to trade. If you ask me what these peculiarities are beyond the outward signs of commerce, I shall answer, a certain absence of taste, a want of leisure and of tone; a substitution of bustle for elegance, care for enjoyment, and show for refinement. Leghorn and Marseilles have betrayed these visible signs of their pursuits more particularly after a long residence in Florence; though neither of these towns is so obnoxious to the charge as any one of our own large maritime towns. I think, however, that all our own great towns, while they are unquestionably provincial, as any one will allow who has lived in a real capital, have also many of the distinctive marks of the better towns of Europe that these have not. When a European speaks of New York as a provincial town,

defer to his greater experience (unless he happen to be cockney); for, rely on it, such is the character and appearance of your Gotham.

Walking through the streets of Leghorn, a shop filled with statuary, Venuses, Apollos, and Bacchantes, caught my eye, and I had the curiosity to enter. If I was struck with admiration on first visiting the tribune of the gallery of Florence, I was still more so here. On inquiry, I found that this was a warehouse that sent its goods principally to the English and American markets: I dare say Russia, too, may come in for a share. Where the things were made I do not know, though probably at Carrara; but I question if any man would have the impudence to display such objects in the immediate vicinity of the collections that contain the originals. Grosser caricatures were never fabricated: attenuated Nymphs and Venuses, clumsy Herculeses, hobbledehoy Apollos, and grinning Fauns, composed the treasures. The quantity of the stuff had evidently been consulted, and, I dare say, the Medicean beauty has lost many a charm for the want of more marble.

The day after our arrival, we were refreshed with a delightful sea-breeze; a luxury, after being heated in Florence from April to August, that must be enjoyed to be appreciated. I can only liken Philadelphia to the latter town in this respect. On visiting the port, I found only one American, though three lay in the roads. Time was, when thirty would have been a trifle. There were ten Englishmen behind the mole, and a good many Sardinians lay scattered about the harbour. Of Tuscans there were but few, and these all small. Three Russians were laid up on account of the war with Turkey! They were fine-looking ships, however. Rowing under the bows of the Yankee, I found one of his people seated on the windlass, playing on the flute; as cool an act of impudence as can well be imagined for a Massachusetts-man to practise in Italy.

I inquired for a conveyance to Naples, and the result was my engaging a Genoese felucca, for one hundred francesconi, for my own exclusive use. This vessel was about thirty tons

burthen, and of beautiful mould. She was decked, and had a hold, but no cabin. In lieu of the latter, the quarter-deck, with the exception of a small space aft for the play of the tiller, &c. and a narrow gangway on each side, was covered with a painted tarpaulin, having a rounded roof like the tilt of a waggon, stretched on large hoops: the space beneath was sufficiently large, and as the covering was ample, and high enough to walk under, it gave us a room far preferable to one below. She was latine-rigged, carrying two sails of that description, and a jib. This little craft had a complement of ten men! I have myself been one of eleven hands, officers included, to navigate a ship of near three hundred tons across the Atlantic Ocean; and, what is more, we often reefed topsails with the watch.*

* The present Commodore ——, when a young man, commanded a merchant ship for a short time. On one occasion, inward bound, the yellow fever broke out in the vessel. Most of the crew died; and all on board, with the exception of the young captain, had the disease. The tasks of tending the sick and of taking care of the ship consequently fell on the latter. He

Having engaged the felucca, we passed another day in gazing at the hazy Apennines, whose lights and shadows, particularly the noble piles that buttress the coast to the northward, rendered them pictures to study; and in driving along the low land that lies between the sea and Monte Nera, where we fairly rioted in the pleasures of the cool breezes. But the entire northern shore of this luxurious sea, in summer, is one scene of magnificent nature, relieved by a bewitching softness, such as perhaps no other portion of the globe can equal. I can best liken it to an extremely fine woman, whose stateliness and beauty are relieved by the eloquent and speaking expression of feminine sentiment.

The next day, at noon, we embarked, and took possession of our new lodgings. The wheels had been taken from the carriage, and the body of the vehicle was placed athwart

cooked, nursed, made and shortened sail, managed the helm, and, after several days of severe labour, brought his vessel safely up to the Hook. What is more extraordinary, he twice reduced the canvass to reefed topsails, and spread it to the royals. Of course, he brought everything to the windlass.

the deck, so as to form a forward bulk-head. W—— had the interior for a state-room. Roberto was put into the hold. There were tarpaulin curtains at both extremities of the tilt, and by the aid of a few counterpanes we subdivided the interior as much as was necessary. Each person had a mattress at night, which pretty well covered the deck; while, piled on each other, they made comfortable sofas during the day. A table, eight or ten chairs, with a few trunks and stools, completed the furniture. Of course, we had the necessary articles of nourishment and refreshment, which our own servants prepared. I never dared to look at the kitchen, but I dare say it was quite as clean as that we had left at Florence.

With this outfit, then, the little *Bella Genovesa** got her anchor, with a light wind at north-west, about five in the afternoon, and began to turn out of the harbour. In half an hour we had made three or four stretches, which enabled us to weather the head of the

* The Beautiful Genoese.

mole, when we stood to the southward, with flowing sheets.

By examining the map, you will perceive that our course lay between a succession of islands and the main, in the south-easterly direction. Of these islands Gorgona and Capraja were in sight on quitting the port, and our first object was to run through, what here is called, the *canal* of Elba; a streight between that island and the head-land, or cape of Piombino. The wind was so light that our progress was slow; and when we took to our mattresses, Leghorn was but two or three leagues behind us.

On turning out next morning, early, I found the felucca close hauled, beating up for the channel, with a fresh breeze at the southward. The brown mountains of Elba formed the back-ground to windward; Porto Ferrajo lying about two leagues from us, directly on our weather-beam. The prospect of beating through the pass, against the lively little sea, which would be certain to get up, was not pleasant to the ladies; and I ordered the

padrone to tack, and stretch in under the land.

We fetched in just beneath the cliff, or promontory, that forms the north-eastern extremity of the town of Porto Ferrajo, a rocky eminence of some elevation. It was crowned by the government house, which had been the palace of Napoleon during his insular reign. My object had been to get into smooth water, by making a lee; but this near view of a place so celebrated was too tempting to be resisted, and I determined to beat up into the bay, even if we should run out again without anchoring. This bay is several miles deep, and at its mouth near a league wide; the land being chiefly mountain and *côtes*. The promontory, on which stands the town, makes a bend on its inner side, like the curve of a hook; and this, aided a little by some artificial works, forms a beautiful and secure little harbour, of which the entrance is towards the head of the bay, the water being everywhere deep, with bold shores.

By ten o'clock we had weathered the mouth

of the little haven, and the wind still continuing foul, I determined to run in and anchor. This was accordingly done, and I had called to a boat to come and put us on shore, when the padrone announced the appalling news of there being a quarantine of fifteen days between Elba and Naples! We immediately hauled out of the harbour, and only waited to breakfast, before we went to sea again. While discussing this meal on deck, the padrone was discussing matters with a brother of the craft, on board another felucca; and he came to me to say, that, though there *was* a quarantine of fifteen days between Elba and Naples, there was none at all between the Roman states and Tuscany, or the Roman states and Naples; and that, by running into Cività Vecchia, we might get clean bills of health, and all would be plain sailing. — So much for a Mediterranean quarantine! I accepted the terms, and we landed.

Porto Ferrajo is a small crowded town, populous for its size, containing five thousand souls, lying on the acclivity on the inner side

of the promontory. It is pretty well fortified, though the works are old, it being walled, and having two little citadels, or forts, on the heights. It was garrisoned by five hundred men, they told me; and there were two hundred galley-slaves kept in the place. The town was clean enough, the streets having steps, or narrow terraces, by which we ascended the hills.

The arrival of a party of strangers created a sensation; for, with the exception of the brief interruption of the presence of Napoleon, there are few more retired spots in Europe than this. We went to the best inn, which bears the imposing title of the *Quattri Nazioni*. It was far from bad, and it gave us a reasonably good dinner; and furthermore, it promised us four beds and a sofa, should we pass the night there. The art of colouring the bricks of the floors has not reached this inn; for the room in which we dined had a sofa and seven mirrors, while the floor was of coarse, dirt-coloured bricks full of holes. Ireland and America are not the only countries in which dis-

crepancies in style occur. In short, England is the only country where they do not; and even in England there is something inappropriate, in seeing three or four powdered lackeys, and a well-appointed equipage, before the door of a mean, dingy town-house of bricks, with three or four windows in front, and quite destitute of all architectural taste.

I had some conversation with the people of the house concerning their late sovereign. Napoleon arrived in the evening, and remained in the frigate until next day. One of his first acts was to send for the oldest known flag used by Elba, and this he caused to be hoisted on the forts; a sign of independency. He was not much seen in the town, though he often rode out on horseback, and a carriage-road around the head of the bay was pointed out as his work.

We found it so agreeable to be on a spot to which travellers do not resort, that, I think, the felucca would have been discharged, and we should have remained on this island two

or three months, had good accommodations offered. There were also some hints of malaria that did not encourage this notion.

While at the inn, I saw what the Italians call a *tarantula:* not a spider, but the lizard which bears this name. Perhaps nine-tenths of the Italians fancy the bite of this animal mortal; though it cannot bite at all, I believe. It is a perfectly inoffensive lizard, living on insects, and is found in America, where no one ever hears of its poison. It is, however, a most disgusting-looking object; which is probably the reason it bears so bad a name. The scorpion of Italy, also, is not in favour. We found several at St. Illario, but they are not dangerous in this latitude; the sting being about as bad as the bite of a spider. Both these animals are held in great respect by ordinary travellers; Mr. Carter, among others, dwelling on their horrors. This amiable and well-intentioned man saw more important things through quite as mistaken a medium.

After dinner we walked up to the head of

the promontory to see the house of Napoleon. It stands conspicuously, is low and small, being composed of a main body and two wings, showing a front, in all, of ten windows. The entire length may have been ninety feet, or a little less; but the other dimensions were not on a proportionate scale. It was now inhabited by the governor of the island, and we could not obtain admission, as he was at dinner. Near this building is another, that stands on the street, against the acclivity, and which has a better air, as to comfort. It has but one principal story, but it showed fifteen windows in a row. This was the house occupied by *Madame Mère*, we were told.

We might have lingered longer on this height, which overlooks the sea, but I found the wind blowing fresh from the north-west, which was as fair as could be desired. Hurrying down to the port, I directed the felucca to be got under way. This order was a commencement of the difficulties of Mediterranean navigation. I was covered with protestations of the impossibility of putting to sea in such

weather, blowing as it did. At this I laughed, telling my padrone that I was an old sailor myself, and was not to be imposed on in this manner. The wind was fair, and we could make a lee behind Elba in an hour if we found too much sea; but to this he would not listen. I then pointed to the females, and asked him if he were not ashamed to pretend fear, when they wished to go to sea. This touched his pride a little, and, after a good deal of wrangling, I got him out of the port, just as the sun was setting.

We found the wind fresh outside, but as fair as could be wished. Our course was to double the eastern end of the island, where there was a narrow passage between it and a small rocky islet; the place of which Napoleon is said to have taken possession with a corporal's guard, as soon as he was established. It was a dependency of the new empire. This act of his has been laughed at, and is cited as a proof of his passion for conquest; but it strikes me as more probable that he did it to prevent an unpleasant neighbourhood. The insignificance of

the spot had caused it to be overlooked in the treaty by which his sovereignty over Elba had been retained, and it belonged to him only *by construction.* Political constructions are useful to the managing; and as it is probable he already meditated the events of 1815 in 1814, it was a measure of forethought to occupy a spot that might otherwise have proved embarrassing in the possession of spies.

When I pointed to this passage to leeward, the padrone pointed to the sky to windward. There was a lively sea on, but the little felucca skimmed it beautifully. The people, however, began to murmur, and A—— begging that we might have no difficulty, they were permitted to take their own course, which was to run across the streight, under the lee of Piombino, where we anchored, at nine.

At day-light next day, the wind being still fair, but very light, we got under way, and stood to the southward, having lost at least forty miles of our run, by stopping in at Piombino. About eight, the wind came ahead, and we made several stretches, until ten, when it

fell calm. There was a small rocky islet, about a mile from us, and we swept the felucca up to it, and anchored in a little sandy bay. The padrone said this island was called Troas. It contained about thirty acres, being a high rock with a little shrubbery, and it was surmounted by an ancient and ruined watch-tower.

We landed and explored the country. Our arrival gave the alarm to some thousands of gulls, and other marine birds, who probably had not been disturbed before for years.

W—— undertook to ascend to the tower,—an exploit that was more easily achieved than the descent was effected. He found it the remains of a watch-tower, of which this coast has hundreds, erected as a protection against the invasions of the Barbary corsairs. The sight of such objects brought the former condition of these seas vividly to the mind. With one coast peopled by those who were at the head of civilization, and the other by those that were just civilized enough to be formidable, constant warfare, the habits of slavery, and the harem,

one can understand the uses of all these towers. Difficulties existing between France and Algiers just at this moment, several of our French acquaintances had tried to persuade us there was danger in even making this little voyage; and when at Marseilles, lately, I witnessed the departure of a brig, which was accompanied by the prayers of hundreds, her sailing having been actually delayed some time on the same account! The impression of the risks must have been strong, to prove so lasting. As to the tower on the little island, it could only have been used as a look-out to give notice of the approach of corsairs, and as a protection to the coasters, for there were no people to take refuge in it.

The north wind made at noon, and we embarked. We had a good run for the rest of the day, at the distance of a league or two, from a coast lower than common, off which there were many islets, and some banks of sand visible. The channel lay near one of the latter, which might have offered some danger, had we stood on the previous night. The

padrone pointed to it with exultation, asking me how I should have liked to be laid on it in the dark. I pointed into the offing, and inquired, in turn, if there were not water enough for the Bella Genovesa between the sands and Monte Christo, a small island that was dimly visible to the westward, and which lies about half way between Corsica and the main. My Genoese shrugged his shoulders as he muttered, "As if one would like to be out there, in a little felucca, in a mistrail!" It was quite obvious this fellow was no Columbus.

Just before sunset we came up with a high headland that looked like an island, but which in fact was Monte Argentaro; a peninsula connected with the continent by a low spit of sand. Behind it lies one of the best harbours for small craft in Italy, and the town of Orbitello. Directly abreast of it, and at no great distance, are several small islands, and we took the course between them. This was delightful navigation, at the close of a fine day in August, with a cool north wind, and in such a sea. We ran so near the mountain as to discern

the smallest objects, and were constantly changing the scene. On this headland I counted seven watch-towers, all in sight at the same moment, and all within the space of a league or two. Including Elba, we must have seen and passed this day, in a run of about twenty miles, some twenty islands.

The wind died away with the disappearance of the sun, and when we took to the mattresses it was a flat calm. I was awoke, next morning, by the creaking of the yards; and rising I found we were working up to Cività Vecchia, with a foul but light wind,—a business we had been engaged in nearly all night. The Roman coast commenced as soon as we were clear of Argentaro, and we were now stretching in towards it, approaching within half a mile. It was low; and the watch-towers, better constructed than common,—a sort of martello tower,—were so near each other as completely to sweep the beach with their guns. They appeared so well that I attributed them to Napoleon, but the padrone affirmed they were constructed a long time since.

Cività Vecchia soon became distinctly visible. It lies around a shallow cove, with an artificial basin within it, and a mole stretching athwart the mouth of the cove. There is good holding-ground off the mole, and against easterly or north-easterly weather a good roadstead, but not much better than is to be found anywhere else on the west side of the boot. At ten we doubled the mole and ran into the port, where we found about fifty vessels, principally feluccas.

We landed and went to an inn, a miserable place at the best. Here we ordered breakfast; but the coffee, almost always bad in Italy, is getting to be worse as we proceed south, though better in the large towns at the south than in the small ones at the north. There was no milk, and even fish was difficult to be had.

Cività Vecchia is small, but not dirty. There is an ancient mole, and a basin that once contained Roman gallies. The bronze rings by which they made fast to the quays still remain! To my surprise I was told there

was an American consul here. He proved to be a consular agent, appointed by the consul at Rome; and I found him in a shop weighing some sugar, with a cockade in his hat as large as a small plate. He was civil and useful, however, for he obtained our passports, which had been taken from us on landing, without delay, and was serviceable in getting the necessary papers for the felucca.

After breakfasting and walking through the little town, we were anxious to proceed, for there was not time to look at some curious objects in the vicinity, and as for the town itself it was soon exhausted. By dint of two hours of pretty hard work I got the padrone on board, and compelled him to get under way. We beat into the offing at five, and then made a fair wind of it. The run this evening was delightful. The wind soon hauled and blew fresh from the land, leaving us perfectly smooth water, and we glided along at the rate of seven knots, so near the shore as to discern everything of moment. Among other objects we passed a fortress of some magnitude. At first

the land was high, but, as the day declined, it melted away, until it got to be a low waste. This, we knew, was the water-margin of the celebrated Campagna of Rome; and about nine the padrone pointed out to us the position of Ostia, and the mouths of the Tiber. He kept the vessel well off the shore, pretending that the malaria at this season was so penetrating as to render it dangerous to be closer in with the wind off the land. As this was plausible, and at least safe, I commended his caution.

I was singularly struck by the existence of this subtle and secret danger in the midst of a scene otherwise so lovely. The night was as bright a starlight as I remember to have seen. Nothing could surpass the diamond-like lustre of the placid and thoughtful stars; and the blue waters through which we were gliding, betrayed our passage by a track of molten silver. While we were gazing at this beautiful spectacle, a meteor crossed the heavens, illuminating everything to the brightness of a clear moonlight. It was much the finest meteor I ever saw, and its course included more than half of the arch

above us. The movement, apparently, was not swifter than that of a rocket, nor was the size of the meteor much less than one of the ordinary dimensions. Its light, however, was much more vivid and purer, having something intense, and much beyond the reach of art, in it. Soon after this beautiful sight, we retired to our mattresses.

Next morning we were off the Pontine Marshes, with Cape Circello, the insulated bluff in which they terminate, and the islands of Ponza and Palmarola, in sight. The latter were the first Neapolitan land we saw. The wind came a-head and light, as had invariably been the case since we left Leghorn in the morning. We gave ourselves no uneasiness on this account, feeling almost certain of a shift to the westward; a change as ancient as the Romans, this being their zephyr, which blows in summer almost daily in this part of the Mediterranean. From the sea the Pontine Marshes did not present an appearance sensibly different from that of the coast near Ostia. Both were low, and in some places reedy; and

yet we saw dwellings along them immediately on the coast. One large, naked, treeless house, we were told, was the residence of a cardinal. There was even a small town visible, though nothing of importance, immediately next the marshes. The lowest part of the Pontine Marshes, however, is not on the coast to the west of them, but on the north, near Terracina; the stream that passes through them, as well as the canal, having that direction. The margin of the marshes next the sea, I take it, is higher than their centre, the drains running north and south.

A favourable slant of wind enabled us to double Cape Circello at noon, when we opened the Gulf of Gaeta, Terracina, and all the grand coast of that vicinity. The volcanic peaks of Ischia loomed in the distance, and the zephyr coming fresh and fair, we soon raised other objects of interest along the Neapolitan shore. Our course was, as near as might be, to the south-east, across the mouth of the gulf, and, as the coast receded, the fine mountains fell away in haze; but our mariners

having an instinct for the land, we got better views than might have been expected, as we did not make a perfectly straight wake.

Towards the middle of the afternoon we had the town and citadel of Gaeta abeam, dimly visible. A thunder-storm among the mountains produced a magnificent effect, though it frightened the padrone into shifting his sails, and even spars, for he sent down the old ones, and sent up a lighter set. We lost time unnecessarily by this precaution, for the wind did not increase. He showed me, however, two Neapolitan gun-vessels struggling through it, two or three leagues in shore of us.; and we had the consolation of knowing that, had we been in their places, our smaller sails might have been of use.

Just before the gust appeared, I discovered a conical isolated mountain to the south-east, looming up in the haze. It proved to be Vesuvius. We saw it over the nearer but lower land of Baiæ and its vicinity. As usual, the wind fell at sunset, and finally it shifted. We had a little rain, and went to sleep uncertain of the result.

The next was the sixth day we had passed on board the Bella Genovesa. Going on deck at sun-rise, I found the felucca contending with a head wind, but luckily in a smooth water. On our right, lay high dark mountains thrown into picturesque forms, with shore lined with hamlets and towns. This was Ischia. Ahead was another island, of the same character, resembling a gigantic sea-wall thrown before the bay. This was Capri. On our left, lay a small, low, level island, teeming with life; and to the north and east of us, opened the glorious Bay of Naples, with its thousands of objects of interest, that, by their recollections, embrace nearly all of known time.

The wind blew directly in our teeth, and we beat up the whole distance, making short stretches close in with the western, or rather northern side of the bay. The multitude of things of interest we saw and passed, rendered the time short, though it took us three hours.

As the day opened, and we advanced farther into this glorious bay, we could not help exclaiming, "What dunce first thought of insti-

tuting a comparison between the bay of New York and this?" It is scarcely possible for two things composed of the same elements to be less alike, in the first place; nor are their excellencies the same in a single essential point. The harbour of New York is barely pretty; there being, within my own knowledge, some fifty ports that equal, or surpass it, even, in beauty. These may not be in England, a country in which we seek every standard of excellence; but the Mediterranean alone is full of them. No one would think of applying the term pretty, or even handsome, to the Bay of Naples; it has glorious and sublime scenery, embellished by a bewitching softness. Neither the water nor the land is the same. In New York, the water is turbid and of a dullish green colour, for in its purer moments, it is, at the best, of the greenish hue of the entire American coast; while that of the Bay of Naples has the cerulean tint and limpidity of the ocean. At New York, the land, low and tame in its best months, offers nothing but the verdure and foliage of spring and summer, while the coasts of this gulf, or bay, are thrown into the

peaks and faces of grand mountains, with the purple and rose-coloured tints of a pure atmosphere and a low latitude. If New York does possess a sort of back-ground of rocks, in the Plaisadoes, which vary in height from three to five hundred feet, Naples has a natural wall, in the rear of the Campania Felice, among the Apennines, of almost as many thousands. This is speaking only of nature. As regards artificial accessories, to say nothing of recollections, the shores of this bay are teeming with them of every kind; not Grecian monstrosities, and Gothic absurdities in wood, but palaces, villas, gardens, towers, castles, cities, villages, churches, convents, and hamlets, crowded in a way to leave no point fit for the eye unoccupied, no picturesque site unimproved. On the subject of the scale on which these things are done, I will only say, that we tacked the felucca, in beating up to the town, under the empty windows of a ruined palace, whose very base is laved by the water, and whose stones would more than build all the public works on the shores of our own harbour, united.

The public mind in America has got to be so

sickly on such subjects, that men shrink from telling the truth; and many of our people not only render themselves, but some render the nation, ridiculous, by the inflated follies to which they give utterance. I can safely say, I never have seen any twenty miles square of Lower Italy, if the marshes and campagnas be excepted, in which there is not more glorious scenery than I can recall in all those parts of America with which I am acquainted. Our lakes will scarcely bear any comparison with the finer lakes of Upper Italy; our mountains are insipid as compared with these, both as to hues and forms; and our seas and bays are not to be named with these. If it be patriotism to deem all our geese swans, I am no patriot, nor ever was; for, of all species of sentiments, it strikes me that your "property patriotism" is the most equivocal. Be on your guard against the statements of certain low political adventurers, who are as notorious for abusing everything American, while in Europe, as they are for extolling them, when in America.

I am far from underrating the importance

to give natural scenery to a nation; I believe it not only aids character, but that it strengthens attachments. But calling a second-rate, or an inferior thing, a first-rate and a superior, is not making it so. There is, in America, enough of beautiful nature, coupled with the moral advantages we enjoy, to effect all necessary ends, without straining the point to the absurd; but there is very little of the grand, or the magnificent.

We got up with the head of the mole, (the only harbour of Naples being the small basin behind this mole,) about noon, and immediately landed and sought an inn. As we drove along the streets, we met one of the royal equipages, a coach and six, and one of four, with a portly, well-looking man, with a Bourbon face, in the former. It was the Prince of Salerno, a brother of the king. Our guide took us to the *delle Crocelle*, one of the principal inns in the Caiga, where we found excellent and roomy accommodations.

LETTER XII.

Comparison between Naples and New York.—Vesuvius.—Effects of the Eruption of 1822. — Pompeii. — The great Eruption of 79. — Ruins of Pompeii. — Places of public resort. — Cicero's Seat.—Gradual Disinterment of the Town.—The Sarno.—Herculaneum.—Theatre and other ancient Remains.—Droll Exhibition of Royal Etiquette.

You know the conditions on which these letters are written. I shall go on, in my own desultory manner, gleaning what it appears to me others have left, and speaking of such things only as I know from experience I should most like to have been set right in, did I depend on reading for my own information.

Our first night at Naples was absolutely delicious. There was a young moon, and everything was soft and lovely. It reminded us of an evening in August at New York, when people walk without their hats, and enjoy themselves after the intense heat of the day.

But Naples has one great advantage over our own town. It lies literally on the sea; for the bay has all the advantages of the sea itself, and scarcely ever wants its refreshing influence. In the deep ravines of streets, one is entirely sheltered from the sun, and on the shore, one feels the air from the water. We have built a northern town in a southern latitude, though not without some excuse for it.

But the two towns are as unlike as their scenery. One is condensed, the houses clinging, in places, to rocky cliffs, some of the streets actually lying a hundred or two feet above their immediate neighbours; while the other is struggling, and has a surface shaved down nearly to a water level. One is overflowing with population; the other, properly peopled, would contain five times its present numbers. One is all commerce, shipping, drays, and stevedores, the particles of taste and beauty existing in fragments; the other all picturesque, the trade and the port forming the exception.

Immediately beneath our windows, here, is a line of sea-beach, of more than a mile in

extent, that has no sign of trade about it beyond the boats of fishermen, which lie scattered on the sands and shingle as if disposed there for the study of the painter. But I must not anticipate.

Vesuvius alone disappointed our expectation. It appeared low and insignificant compared with the mountains we had seen, filled the eye less in the view than we had imagined, and was altogether differently placed. As to its height, it varies essentially by the rising and falling of the crater, and I am told it is several hundred feet lower now than it was a year since. Indeed, one well-informed person says, its last great fall exceeded a thousand feet. You may easily imagine, however, that a mountain that could bear such a loss must be of respectable dimensions. I should think the present height of Vesuvius not far from three thousand feet; but there are peaks behind Castel-a-mare of double this altitude. The summits of Ischia and Capri are also high, and the whole southern shore of the bay is a noble outline of mountains.

Vesuvius, and indeed Naples, stands differently from what I had thought. The bay itself may be near twenty miles in depth, and its width varies from about fourteen, to something like eighteen miles, it being a little wider at its mouth than at its head. The general direction is east a little north, perhaps east-north-east. Now, the head of this bay, though irregular, is square, rather than rounded. Of the two, it presents a convex line to the water, rather than one that is concave. Naples stands at the north-east corner, and Castel-a-mare at its south-east, distant from each other about fifteen miles in a direct line; and Vesuvius occupies the centre, a little nearer to the first than to the last. All idea of danger to either of these places from lava, is an absurdity. They have reason to apprehend earthquakes, and internal convulsions, but nothing that comes out of the crater can ever harm either. Even Portici, which stands on the base of the mountain itself, is deemed to be reasonably safe.

The hazards of this volcano are easily estimated. Lava, the only serious cause of danger,

breaks out of the sides of the mountain. It resembles the boiling over of a pot, and its descent can be calculated like that of water. The interposition of a ravine offers an effectual barrier. As to the stones and other fiery missiles that are projected into the air, they necessarily fall in, or on the sides of the water; and their flight does not much exceed that of a bullet, at the most. It is probably two miles in an air line, from the limits of their fall to the nearest habitation, if we except the Hermitage, which is near half that distance. The ashes certainly are borne to a great distance; but they do good rather than harm, greatly fertilizing the surrounding country. Vesuvius is, in fact, as far from Naples as the heights of Staten Island are from New York, and the water actually lies between them.

One of our first visits was to Pompeii, which lies, perhaps, more properly at the head of the bay than Castel-a-mare, though they are not far asunder. The distance between the summit of the mountain and Pompeii is about five miles; the direction is from north-west to

north-east, Vesuvius lying most northerly. This, of course, brings Pompeii on the side opposite to that of Naples, and about one half nearer to the crater. But lava could no more touch this place, than it could touch Naples, the formation of the land carrying it more towards the water. The road winds round the head of the bay, which has a succession of hamlets, villas, towns, and palaces. Indeed, I scarcely know a spot that is more teeming with population than the base of this terrible mountain. It is true that there is a broad belt of broken rising ground between the sea and the regular ascent, of three or four miles in width; but even this is dotted with habitations, and the lava *does* find its way across it. We saw two or three towns and villages in ruins, from the great eruption of 1822. The lava had passed directly over houses, when they were strong enough to resist it, and through them, when not. Of course, that which had cooled, remained, and it is not easier to fancy a more complete picture of desolation than these black belts of ruin present in the midst of a moving

population; — even the road had been cut through them. These towns are populous, Torre del Greco having twelve or thirteen thousand souls, Castel-a-mare more, and Portici several thousands. The celebrated palace at the latter is so placed that the public highway passes directly through its great court, a singular caprice of royalty.

I think we were all a little disappointed with Pompeii. Perhaps our expectations were wrought up too high, for, certainly, I have approached no place in Europe with the same feverish excitement. Still it is an extraordinary thing to see even these remains of a Roman town, brought to light, as they have been, in their ancient appearance. As some popular errors, however, exist on the subject of this place, and touching the catastrophe by which it was overwhelmed, I shall first endeavour to tell you what I have ascertained on these points on the spot.

You probably know that, while all this region afforded geological evidence of a volcanic

origin, as is the fact with Ischia, Sorrento, and so much more of it to-day, including Naples itself, there was no historical account, antecedently to the great eruptions, of there having been an active volcano. The peak of Vesuvius has now three distinct summits, separated by deep valleys, and it is probable that these three peaks were formerly united in one, the separation being owing to the explosion. Lest you should form an erroneous notion of the present appearance, however, of this celebrated mountain, it may be necessary to add that the cone, or the peak, which is actually called Vesuvius, is so much higher and more conspicuous than the others, that its form of cone is not much impaired by the fact, not at all as seen from many points, particularly from the direction of the sea. The three mountains, too, if they can be so termed, stand near each other, on a common base, their dividing valleys, or ravines, not descending more than a few hundred feet, and they are entirely insulated from the ordinary ranges of the Apennines.

The great eruption, which occurred in the year 79, was preceded by the usual signs; but, there being no crater, or, at the most, only an old one, the first explosion was necessarily tremendous. Pliny describes the smoke as resembling a gigantic pine, which rose to a vast height, and veiled the sun. He meant a pine of this region, or what is sometimes called a stone pine, of which many are now to be seen in Lower Italy. It is a tall tree, with an umbrella-shaped top, very different from any pine we have, and which resembles the smoke of a fire, before it is driven away by the wind. Boiling water, pumice stones, ashes, and heated sulphureous air, accompanied the explosion, and lava succeeded. The wind must have been at the north, for Pliny the elder lost his life on the beach near Castel-a-mare, by inhaling the heated gas, a distance of at least seven miles from the crater. As no one else near him appears to have suffered, his death was probably owing to a particular condition of the body; defective lungs, most probably. The people of Pompeii had time to remove many of their

effects; but the greatest of the popular errors has arisen from a misapprehension of the nature of the interment. Even now, the buildings are scarcely covered, and the dirt, or ashes, that lie on them, is so light, that it may be shoveled like dry sand. The country is principally in the vine, and there is a light soil of course; but, this removed, in dry weather nothing can be more easily worked than these ancient ashes. Now, every object of any elevation, such as the towers, must have been left above ground. These would serve as landmarks; and, as very few things are found in the houses, it is probable that their owners dug into them, after the alarm was over, and took away everything of value that could be found. The few human remains prove that the danger was not instantaneous, or without notice; for thousands would have been destroyed in such a case, instead of one or two hundreds.

It is usual to say that the site of Pompeii was discovered about eighty years since. This may be true as respects the generation then in being, but could not be true as to very many

that went before it. Discoveries of this nature are a little equivocal. If a man of letters stumbles on any ancient remains, or a fine valley, or a statue, he calls himself a discoverer, though thousands in the neighbourhood know all about them ; the latter do not write books on the subject. The ashes are only about eighteen feet deep, and the walls, in some places, are even higher than this. The temples, amphitheatre, and even some of the houses, must have exceeded this height. It is probable that adventurers have been down into these ruins, in places, in every age since the accident occurred, though the state of intelligence has prevented the facts from being published. A Neapolitan poet who wrote near two centuries since, alludes to the towers as visible in his time. Nothing but alarm could have prevented the people from clearing away the ashes, and taking possession of their town again ; for the expense could not greatly exceed that of clearing the streets of New York after a hard winter.

To me, much the most interesting object at

Pompeii is the amphitheatre. It is complete with the exception of its ornaments, and the marble seats, of which just enough remain to prove that they once existed; their disappearance demonstrates that the place had been pretty thoroughly explored, probably soon after the eruption. This amphitheatre stands by itself, in a corner of the town, against the walls, and is large for the place. Were those of Rome, Verona, and Nismes, and one or two more, not in existence, it would be thought prodigious.

The houses of Pompeii, you will readily conceive, were low, and they had the flat roofs, of cement, that are still used in all this region, the shape being a little rounded so as to turn the water. I should think few of them could have been destroyed by the weight of the ashes immediately, though time would be certain to cause their beams to rot. Most of the dwellings were connected with shops, but there are enough of a better sort, to give one a very respectful opinion of the luxury of the Romans. They are built around courts, which, in this mild climate,

would answer all the purposes of halls for most of the year, and which, probably, were often veiled from the heat of the sun by awnings. The diminutive size, and the want of light and other conveniences of the sleeping-rooms, however, rather detracts from an estimate of ancient comfort. The scale on which the places of public resort existed, such as the amphitheatre and theatres, the forum, temples, and baths, coupled with the showy character of the greater, and the meaner character of the more private, apartments of the dwellings, I think, leave an impression against the *individuality* of the people. I do not know whether the public *meddled* as much among the Romans, as among us Anglo-Saxons, but the inference seems to be pretty fair, that the man lived voluntarily more before it than is our practice.

Here I first saw a small fragment of the Appian Way. This road was far from straight, making deviations from the direct line to communicate with towns and posts, as well as to avoid natural impediments; as is proved both here and at Pozzuoli, as well as in other places.

It entered Pompeii by the Naples gate, and left it near the amphitheatre. It has been uncovered for some little distance in the former direction; and, as usual, it was bordered by tombs. Cicero somewhere speaks of sitting with a friend in a certain seat, without this gate, near to a particular tomb, reading one of his Offices. The seat and tomb are both there!

Pompeii certainly offers a multitude of objects of intense interest, (but which I shall not describe for the thousandth time;) but whoever fancies he sees in it a disinterred town that needs only to be peopled to be perfect, has an imagination more fertile than mine. It wears the aspect of a ruin. It is true that the modern towns and villages of this region are not without something of the same appearance; for the absence of visible roofs, the apertures of the windows, which, when open, show no glass,—and open they generally are in summer,—and the dun hue, conspire to give them a look not unlike that of this Roman city. But Pompeii has still more of this character, from the manner in

which its temples were destroyed, (as is thought,) by a severe earthquake a few years previously to the eruption. The broken columns, and the other fragments, sufficiently testify to this fact.

The walls are well preserved, and I walked for some distance on them. The summits of their towers have principally disappeared, for they must have risen above the ashes, and were probably the towers spoken of by the poet mentioned, the Romans seldom building any other. They have a strong resemblance to the walls of the towns of France, which were used before artillery was much improved. The inscriptions, signs, scribbling on the walls, and divers other little usages of the sort, certainly produce a startling effect, referring as they do to the most familiar things of an age so very remote, and in a manner of so little design. These things savour more of peopled streets, than the houses.

The Neapolitan government keeps slowly at work, disinterring. Its deliberation has been idly censured, as are many other things of this

nature, by inconsiderate travellers; but I believe it prudent and even necessary. The town is probably near half disinterred, and it would be possible to lay it entirely bare in a twelve-month,—perhaps in a single month; but it would be at the risk of injuring paintings, as well as of loss by frauds and haste. A small piece of coin mixed with ashes and cinders, or a child's toy, is easily overlooked in a scramble. This much derided deliberation is probably in the interest of knowledge, besides the fact that nothing presses. A house had been laid open just before our visit, that showed the necessity for caution. Among other curious things, in its court was a small fountain, ornamented with shells, which came out as fresh and uninjured as if they had just been put together. Another house nearly adjoining, has a similar fountain. In both cases the courts are rather small, though one of the buildings has the appearance of a dwelling of some pretension. You will understand that these courts did not receive carriages, like ours, or rather like the European courts, but they were a species of

domestic cloisters, by which the light was admitted, and by means of which the communications with the different rooms were maintained. In a few instances there were small gardens in addition to the courts; but I suspect that the street which contains most of the good houses remains to be opened. Looking about at the forum, theatres, and temples, I find it difficult to believe that such edifices would have been erected for the uses of those only who dwelt in habitations like most of these which have already been disinterred.

It would be possible to render Pompeii immeasurably more interesting than it is at present, by roofing a few of the houses; or by covering them with arches, and using them as places in which to exhibit the different articles found there, and which are now assembled in the Studio at Naples. Perhaps one of the buildings might be nearly furnished in such a manner. I think, as things now are, the ruins lose in interest by the absence of these articles, and the articles by the absence of the ruins. There would be a certain inconvenience in this ar-

rangement, it is true, but I think it would be more than compensated for, by the intensity of the interest that would be created, to say nothing of the greater distinctness that would be afforded to our idea of the ancient domestic economy.

Pompeii once stood on a low promontory, and was a port, but the land has made in a way to throw the sea back, fully a mile. Through this low bottom the Sarno now flows into the bay. In the present state of the entrance of the river, no vessel could approach the town, it being difficult to get a common boat into it when there is any wind. A portion of this stream was led through the town, and the water still flows in the artificial channel beneath the houses and temples!

Our guide went through the usual routine tolerably well, but he had obtained a droll jumble of languages from the different strangers who frequent the place. With *him* the conversation was principally in Italian and French, while among ourselves we occasionally spoke English. Ambitious to show his knowledge,

he called out to me, as I stepped into a building to examine it, with a strange confusion of grammar and tongues—"*Eh! Signore; celuilà sono tutti shops.*"

Returning from Pompeii, we stopped to visit Herculaneum. This place, in very many particulars, is of far greater interest than the other. It was much more important of itself, and, instead of being barely covered with ashes and cinders, it was indeed, burned; the distance between the pit of the theatre that is opened, and the surface of the ground, being about seventy feet. Lava did the work here, and as every thing was covered while the rolling mass was in a state of fusion, the fiery fluid found its way into every crevice, cooling around them, so as to preserve the forms of the things it enveloped.

You know that Herculaneum was discovered by digging a well. Since that time, which was more than a century since, the hole has been cut so as to disinter the entire pit of the theatre, and galleries have been cut around it, enabling one to examine nearly all of the edifice. Owing

to the formation of the ground, this city has been covered very unequally, not only as to depth, but as to substance. The lava is a hundred feet deep in places, while, towards Resina, the covering is very like that of Pompeii, and not essentially deeper. This thin and light coat of earth, however, is unfortunately over the suburbs, rather than over the town itself. A portion of these suburbs have been laid bare, and the result has been the discovery of several houses, and even portions of streets, that are very like those of Pompeii. One is called a villa, that is not much, if any, inferior to the well-known villa of the latter town.

It is fair to presume that this region was much visited by earthquakes, previously to the great eruption. A pent volcano is certain to produce calamities of this nature, and we know from history, that the earthquake of 69 did great injury to these two towns in particular. Slight earthquakes are even now quite common. To this cause is probably owing the lowness of the dwellings; those of Herculaneum, that are quite laid open, being no higher

than those of Pompeii. There were also a forum and a temple opened, but parts have been filled again in receiving the *debris* of new diggings. Some apprehensions for the town above may have caused this provision ; as Portici and Resina both stand, more or less, over the buried city.

We descended into the theatre by a passage cut through the lava, and explored its neighbourhood by torchlight. The stage, proscenium, consular seats, orchestra, and lobbies, are open ; and it was a curious sensation to wander through such places under such circumstances. The general appearance was that of a mine ; but when the eye came to scrutinize the details, and to find that the place was once actually a populous city, which exists as near as possible in its ancient condition, embedded, filled, gorged with lava, a feeling of awe and of intense admiration comes over one. I think this place, out of all comparison, the most imposing sight of the two. Pompeii offers more to investigation, and more for the gratification of common curiosity ; but there is a sublimity

in the catastrophe of Herculaneum, a grandeur in its desolation, that has no parallel. One is like examining a mummy carelessly prepared, in which the mass has been so far preserved, it is true, as to show a general but a hideous likeness to humanity, while the other is opening one of those graves that, owing to some property of soil, preserves the body with most of the peculiarities of the living man. The lava and the stone of the edifices are so intimately united, that one does not, at first, distinguish between them in those places where the separation has not been made; and I cannot describe the effect on the feelings, when it is suddenly ascertained that the hand is actually resting on a portion of a human structure.

As the light descends by the large opening that was made around the well, the stage and pit of the theatre, with all its more principal parts, are sufficiently obvious. But even this excites a sensation different from any other ruin (the word is misapplied, for every thing is nearly as perfect as on the day when the catastrophe occurred) when the frightful interment is con-

templated. Judge for yourself of the appearance of a large and even elegant structure, placed in the bosom of rocks, eighty feet beneath the surface, and of the crowd of associations that press upon the mind at contemplating such an object. Of the magnitude of the edifice you may form some notion by that of the proscenium, which is set down in the books at one hundred and thirty feet in length, the rest of the building being in proportion of course. It is said this theatre would hold ten thousand people, but the number strikes me as extravagant. When this theatre was first opened, everything that was not liable to be removed, or destroyed, by the motion and heat of the lava, was found as it stood at the moment of the disaster. Thus the stage had all its permanent decorations, though some were displaced and injured, such as bronzes, alabaster columns, &c. These fragments have been preserved in the museums. You know that the celebrated equestrian statues of the Balbi came from Herculaneum.

I have only given you my first impressions on visiting these two remarkable places, as volumes exist filled with their details, arranged with care, and collected with accuracy. To the American, to whom a quaint chimney-top, half a century old, is a matter of interest, I should think few objects in Europe would present more attractions than either; for though much older and even better specimens of ancient arts and ancient manners are certainly to be found, none others exist surrounded by so many of the evidences of familiar life.

The entire base of Vesuvius, which in former times, as now, seems to have been a favourite residence, offers the same species of remains, wherever a shaft is sunk or an opening made, though there are but two or three buried cities. Villas and hamlets have been discovered, however, and I have seen one or two of them in the distance. A much more wonderful thing, as is said, I know not with what truth, however, is the fact, that Pompeii stands on lava, which in itself covers another town. This

may be true, for the site might induce the occupation of the spot; but if true, what a miserable figure human annals make!

On returning from this visit I witnessed a droll scene beneath our windows. There is a small garden, with a pavilion, directly opposite the hotel. It stands on the margin of the sea, is enclosed with a high wall, and is the property of the crown; the royal children frequently coming to it to take exercise. While we were seated in the balconies, enjoying the sea-breeze, a carriage and four, with a *piqueur*, and the royal liveries, drove to the door of the pavilion, and set down a gentleman and a lady, with a boy and a girl, the latter about six, and the former perhaps four years old. These were two of the younger children of the king. They went together into the house. It was not long, however, before they all came out again. A crowd had collected by this time, and every one stood uncovered, the guards, at the gate of the garden, with presented arms. The children were lifted into the *back* seats of the carriage, an open barouche, with great respect, and their

attendants were about to take the front seats, when the little creatures sprang on them, with the zest that forbidden pleasures are apt to excite. The gentleman and lady remonstrated without success; the sight of the horses overcoming the sense of etiquette. The boy, in particular, was for driving. The lady then entered the carriage, carefully avoiding seating herself on the back seat, and finally succeeded in persuading the girl to take her proper place; but his royal highness, the Conde d'Aquila, for such is the appellation of the boy, resolutely refused to budge. At last, the whole affair consuming several minutes, the gentleman entered, seated himself by the side of the lady, took the young prince in his lap, and whispered his remonstrance; but all in vain, the little fellow struggling manfully to get a sight of the horses again. Tired with his pertinacity, he was put, by respectful violence, in his proper place, the servant closed the doors in haste, the coachman whipped his horses, and the equipage dashed off, with the obstinate little prince pinned by force on the precise spot that eti-

quette enjoined he should occupy. The whole time the crowd was uncovered, and the soldiers stood at presented arms.

Deference to royalty is carried very far here. W—— and myself were strolling in one of the public buildings lately, and I stopped to read a proclamation. While carelessly running my eyes over it, a sentinel ordered me to take off my hat. It was commanded that the royal proclamations should be read uncovered. As this was a little too much in the spirit of Gessler, I preferred not reading any more to submission.

I do not mention these things to deride them, for they have their use, though proper substitutes exist; but simply as touches of the country. I wish there was a little less of this abstract deference for station and authority here, as I sincerely wish there were a good deal more of both (under certain limitations of common sense) in America. Society loses nothing by causing those who do not know how to reason, to feel. Besides, there is great danger that, in the absence of respect for station, men

will get to have a respect for mere money, which is the most abject and contemptible of all conditions of the mind, to say nothing of its direct tendency to corruption. I should deem it a *pas en avant*, could we hear it said at home, "That fellow is proud of his descent, his manners, his knowledge of the world, his conversations, his connections," his any thing, in short, instead of the vulgar accusation of being "purse-proud."

LETTER XIII.

Villas in the Environs of Naples.—Castle of St. Elmo.—Views from a Convent.—Villa of Cardinal Ruffo.—Beautiful View of the Bay of Naples and the surrounding Country.—Erroneous notions of Travellers.—Tasso's House.—Sorrento.—The Campo Santo.—Mode of Interment.—The Lazzaroni.—Neapolitan Fruits.—Naples and New York.—Neapolitan Labourers.

HAVING determined to pass the remainder of the season in the vicinity of Naples, we have been employed, for the last week, in looking for a house. Our aim has been the vicinity of the town; so far from it, as to escape its confusion and noise, and yet so near as to possess its conveniences. The occupation has enabled me to see more of the modes of ordinary life, than a traveller usually gets in a hurried visit. At the same time we have given glances at the different objects of curiosity as they presented themselves.

The Bay of Naples, which is truly "*un pezzo*

di cielo caduto in terra," * is surrounded by country houses, of which a large number are to be let. We may have been in fifty of them, and we find them possessing very generally a common character; large edifices, with spacious, sometimes vast apartments, terraces that overlook the sea, and furniture that is rich though commonly decayed. Some of the chairs and tables that we have found in these places, appear to be more than a century old, being caned, gilded, and heavy. We entered houses, that are palaces in extent, in the size and in the number of the rooms, that were utterly destitute of conveniences on the score of furniture, but which were not without a certain air of comfortless magnificence. The views were almost always fine, though perhaps a majority of the situations had objections on account of their vicinity to roads, hamlets, or dusty thoroughfares of some sort or other. Others, again, were more modern, were freshly and even elegantly furnished, but

* "A little bit of heaven fallen upon the earth;" the common Neapolitan saying.

they were too dear. The rents were generally high, for this is the very season when the villas are frequented; the Italians of condition, like the French, seldom visiting their country houses, except for a short time in midsummer, or near the vintage. The latter is their *villagiatura.* These residences around Naples, however, are not, of course, the old baronial hotels on the estates, but merely temporary retreats. The gardens are seldom of much extent, or very well kept, though there are exceptions.

One of the places that we visited in the course of our inquiries, was so remarkable as to merit a particular notice. It was the villa of Cardinal Ruffo; not the prelate who was so celebrated in the revolutionary movements of the last century, for he, I believe, perished at the time, but one of the same dignity, name, and family.

Naples, I have told you, in part occupies broken ground. A volcanic rock tops the city; and here is placed the well known castle of St. Elmo; a citadel, or fortress, that can

almost send its shot down the chimneys of the place, as well as possessing a formidable range for its fire, in the way of marine defence. The view from this castle is singularly beautiful, and, owing to the proximity of the town, and the formation of the land, one can vary it in fifty ways, by slight changes of position. I know no other capital that possesses such a look-out, as it were, in its bosom; that of *Montmartre, though* fine and even extraordinary, *from* its extreme contrasts between town and country, wanting altogether the softened sublimity which reigns all through this region. Immediately below the citadel stands a convent, which is now converted into an hospital, I believe, on the extremest verge of the cliffs; for the part of the town that lies nearest the sea, or the south-western quarter, is placed on terraces, which are separated by perpendicular walls of tufa. From the balconies of this convent there is a terrific bird's-eye view of the more level quarter of the town; —terrific, after all, is not precisely the word I ought to use, for, as I have so often intimated, there is a

softness thrown around every natural object here, that lessens all the harsher features of the landscapes. From this convent I looked into the streets, which resembled narrow ravines, and even the sounds of a town proverbially noisy, ascended to our ears. It required no great stretch of the imagination to fancy the venerable fathers seated at their windows, now contemplating the mites beneath them, engaged in the boisterous and selfish pursuits of their lives, now turning their looks upwards at the serene calm of the blue vacuum, through which, as habit has taught us to imagine, lies the path to heaven. This is the poetical side of the picture, for, were the truth known, I dare say the sight was as often gloating on the baskets of green figs, and luscious grapes, and other delicious objects, that are always to be seen in the streets, as on any thing else. Before proceeding to the villa, I shall add, that we went through this convent, which amply repaid the examination, by its scented and carved sacristy, its picture by Spagnoletto, and its "incense-breathing" chapels. Some of its passages and apartments

were the very quintessence of pious architecture, being cool, fragrant, rich, quaint, and clerkly. Really, one occasionally finds in Italy religious retreats, that are so suited to the climate, the dreamy existence of the country, and the priestly tastes, that there are moments when a monkish feeling comes over me, and even a monkish life has its attractions. I believe, however, that I was not created for vigils and fasts.

The villa of Cardinal Ruffo lies on a terrace a little lower than this convent, facing more to seaward. I do not know the precise elevation of these rocks, but I think St. Elmo cannot be much less than four hundred feet above the bay, if it be any less, and the villa is about two hundred and fifty to three hundred. The garden is pretty, extensive, and is well shaded with trees and shrubs, though the motive appears to be, principally, to exclude the objects in the rear. The house is extensive, though low, standing also on the verge of the cliffs. It was in good order, neat, and reasonably well furnished, having just been

occupied by an Englishman of rank. But no language can do justice to the scene which presented itself, when we reached its balconies. I shall attempt to describe it, however; for, having heard so much of the beauty of this spot, you will feel some desire to get more distinct ideas than can be gained by general eulogiums.

You know the position and magnitude of the bay, and the exquisite beauty of its water. No American who has never been off sounding, can appreciate the latter beauty, I repeat, for I know of no blue water in all America. Our most limpid lakes are nearer the colour of amber than any other, and the entire coast is a sea-green. The Mediterranean, on the other hand, is unusually blue, and its bays and gulphs appear to have as deep a tint as the open sea.*

* Soon after the return of the writer to this country, he was shown a view of the Bay of Naples, painted by Mr. Chapman, which was taken from a spot near the house he had inhabited most of the time he dwelt on its glorious shores. On being asked if it was faithful, he answered, "Perfectly so, *except that the artist has not done justice to the hue of the water, which is not sufficiently blue.*" He was then told, that the ordinary criticism was to complain of the element *as being too blue for nature.* The

The house commands a view of all that part of the bay which lies in the direction of Capri, the opposite coast, with the open sea, in the distance. The foreground was the lower terraces, and the portions of the town that were not hid by the cliffs, on the side of the Chiaja.

The bay itself was asleep, with its bosom dotted with a thousand boats, and crafts of different sizes. The deathlike calm that pervaded everything was in exquisite accordance with the character of the entire view. The mountains were dreamy, the air was filled with a drowsy repose, while the different objects of historical interest over which the eye rather lingered than glanced, gave the whole the semblance of a physical representation of things past, adorned and relieved by a glorious grouping of so much that is exquisite in the usages of the present.

same objection is often made to the skies of Italian and Grecian landscapes, and to the other tints, as exaggerated. All this is a consequence of judging of Nature by a rule that is applicable only to her laws under particular circumstances. These hues certainly vary, but the writer has often seen the lakes of Switzerland and the bay of Naples almost as dark as ultra-marine itself.

Of fishing-boats alone, I feel certain of being within bounds when I say, they were out in hundreds. A long line of them stretched away from near the town, in the direction of Capri, not one of which appeared to have motion. Clusters of them lay scattered about in every direction, and the sails were drooping on board of vessels of nearly every sort of rig known in this picturesque sea. But these elements of beauty might have been assembled elsewhere, though scarcely in such numbers and in so much perfection; for you will remember that, besides the peculiarities of the vessels, their varieties, the boats, the union of sublime land and glorious water, there was also a coast teeming with places over which history, from remote antiquity, had thrown its recollections and its charms. That bewitching and almost indescribable softness of which I have so often spoken, a blending of all the parts in one harmonious whole, a mellowing of every tint and trait, with the total absence of everything unseemly or out of keeping, throw around the picture a seductive ideal, that, blended with the

known reality, I have never before witnessed, or never expect to witness again.

Travellers often come to this place on a hasty visit, and, encountering bad weather, or an unpropitious state of the atmosphere, they go away with false notions of the comparative excellence of things. We have now been ten months in Italy, and, certainly, had we gone away without visiting this portion of the country, we should have formed no accurate opinion of Italian nature. Had we come here during the bad weather, it is equally probable that, by transferring to a time of the year when no nature is seen to advantage the descriptions that refer to the more genial months, we might have felt disposed to accuse those who made them of exaggeration and fraud. Even now, the atmosphere is not of extraordinary purity. It has a sleepy haziness about it, that I find in admirable harmony with the season and the region; but experience has taught me to distinguish between months, and to look for its most peculiar and its greatest charm in a still later season of the year.

It is not an easy thing to find a residence for a family that has no material objection. The price was the great obstacle to taking the villa of Cardinal Ruffo, and we reluctantly turned our eyes in another direction. We had now been three weeks in taverns, and one must experience it to feel the relief that is afforded by getting out of these public places into a private dwelling with a family. Our inn, notwithstanding, offered fewer objections and more attractions than any I was ever in. It was nearly empty at this season—a great advantage in itself, was well kept, had noble rooms, and overlooked the bay.

The choice was finally made at Sorrento, a town of a few thousand inhabitants, directly opposite to Naples, and at the distance of eighteen miles. The house we took has a reputation from having been the one in which Tasso was born, or, at least, *is said* to have been born; and although it is not the villa of Cardinal Ruffo, it is little inferior to it in scenery. The great point of the plain on which Sorrento stands is surrounded in a half

circle by mountains, the segment facing the bay. The whole formation is volcanic, large fissures of the tufa appearing in the shape of deep ravines in various places. Advantage was taken of the accidental position of these ravines, as they form a deep natural ditch around most of the place, which stands on the immediate margin of the plain. This plain is six or seven miles in length, is a continued village, very fertile, and extremely populous. Its elevation above the bay varies from one to two hundred feet, the verge being a perpendicular cliff of tufa nearly the whole distance. Sorrento lies near the south-western extremity, the heights overlooking it. The house we have taken is on the cliffs, within the walls, and in plain sight of every object of interest on the bay, from Ischia to the promontory of Vico, Castel-a-mare and a short reach of the coast in its vicinity excepted.

Having settled the material point of a residence for the remainder of the warm months, we passed a few more days in looking at sights.

I shall say nothing of the Museum, and of similar things, for you can read of them at any time, but confine myself to what has struck me as peculiarities. The first of these shall be the Campo Santo, or the place of interment. A large proportion of the people of Naples die in the hospitals; and even of those who do not, perhaps half are unable to leave means for their interment. A place has accordingly been provided for those who are interred at the public expense.

The Campo Santo is a short distance from the city, enclosed by high walls. There is a chapel near the entrance, with a few rooms for the uses of the officials. As I understand the arrangement, the earth was removed from the entire area, when the cavity was walled up into three hundred and sixty-five separate vaults. As there is, however, so much of that soft material in this vicinity, I am not certain that the desired number of vaults have been cut in the tufa, the effect being the same in the two cases. Each vault has a large hole in the centre, that is covered by a stone fitting closely.

This stone has a ring in the centre, and a movable lever, with its fulcrum, and all on wheels, is in readiness to remove it. Each night the lever is applied to a new ring, and a stone is removed. At an appointed hour the dead arrive in covered carts. Our guide affirmed that, after the religious service, they were then *dumped*, to use a New York term, from the cart into the hole; and judging by what I witnessed, I think this probable. The bodies are next sprinkled with quick lime, and the stone is replaced and closed with cement. At the end of the year, little is found besides bones, which are removed to a bone-house, or vault, kept for that purpose. The hole, however, is not closed for twenty-four hours, the fees paid by the curious being an inducement to keep it in readiness to be opened during that time.

When W—— and I presented ourselves, we were received by a cadaverous-looking priest and sexton, on whose appearance this constant communication with the remains of mortality had produced anything but an aspect of devotion. Our wishes being known, after examin-

ing the place generally, we were desired to look into an open vault: it was quite empty, and indeed clean. The lever was then applied to the ring of the covering of the vault last filled, and a more revolting and hideous spectacle has been seldom witnessed than the one we saw. Seventeen dead bodies were lying naked beneath the hole, in a way that I can only compare to the manner in which Jack-straws fall! If they had not actually been dropped from the cart, no care had been taken even to lay them side by side, but they were placed just as chance had ordered it. A few rags served as apologies to decency, and even these were not always used. Whether they were actually brought from the hospitals in this state, I cannot tell you: the guide affirmed that they were; but one cannot confide in the information of guides.

While the poor meet with the fate of the "unhonoured dead," the taste of the Neapolitans of means is for gorgeous funerals. I have met several in the streets, in which there was more of pageantry than about any private ceremonies of

the sort I have ever witnessed. Led horses is one of the standing honours of a gentleman,—I presume, from some connexion with a chivalrous origin. We observe the same usage, even to this day, in all our own military funerals of field-officers. The body, I find, is often exposed here, as in other parts of Italy, though I have not yet seen it on any of the great occasions just named.

Naples has a corso in the Toledo; but at this season the carriage promenade appears to be by the Chiaja, and along a road that leads to the south-western point of the bay. This is one of the most delightful drives in the world. The road follows the strand for two miles, having houses and villas on one hand, and the water on the other. It passes the Villa Reale, one of the prettiest gardens imaginable, the celebrated gallery of Pozzuoli, or the grotto, as it is usually called. This passage, which is of great antiquity, is of immense convenience, though of no great cost or labour, the rock through which it is cut being soft. The effect on looking through it is singular, for it is never

empty, during the day at least; and as a proof of its utility, it smells like a stable. The reputed tomb of Virgil is on the side of the hill, immediately over the entrance of this grotto. The best reason for believing it to have been erected in honour of the Great Mantuan, is, that if it be not his tomb, no one can say whose tomb it is. After all, Virgil had a tomb, he died here, and this is an ancient work. It may be the tomb of Virgil.

The mole of Naples, and the entire strand from the Castel Nuovo, near it, to the eastern extremity of the town, offer extraordinary exhibitions. This was the region of the Lazzaroni; and finer-looking or merrier vagabonds than those who are now found in it, it is not easy to meet. The streets that they frequent, and in which they may be said to live, lie in this quarter, and are altogether unique. Brawling, laughing, cooking, flirting, eating, drinking, sleeping, together with most of the other concerns of life, are all transacted here beneath the canopy of heaven. The throng resembles the quays of Paris in the neighbourhood of the

Pont Neuf during a fête, with this difference, that as *everybody* of a certain class appears to be out in the French capital on such occasions, the streets of Naples also include every *thing*. The serenity, and, what is of more influence, the security of the weather, converts the streets into dwellings; and if these people have lodgings at all, they must be far less agreeable than the open air.

The veritable Lazzaroni, however,—the houseless fellow who looks to Abraham's bosom as his first regular lodgings,—has greatly diminished of late years, if he exists at all. Murat made soldiers of them, and otherwise gave them something to do, and they are now less averse to regular employment than formerly. I saw many at work, quite as near a state of nature as our Indians in a war dress, the paint and feathers being so much the more in favour of the latter. The only garment was a pair of very unsophisticated breeches, that did not cover a fourth of the thighs. The colour, as may be imagined from exposure under such a sun, was not essentially different.

The day we arrived, while the felucca was hauling into her berth, I observed a pair of feet, soles uppermost, just out of water, not far from the shore. Watching them for some time, they gradually sunk, when a swarthy face came up in their place. This was one of the Lazzaroni getting his dinner from the smaller shell-fish. A long resident here tells me that these people can exist in summer on incredibly small sums; such as three or four *grani* a day. Coarse bread, grapes, and most fruits are cheap; "and recollect," added my friend, "when you give a Neapolitan beggar a *grano* (which is less than a cent) you give him a meal." The figs are delicious, and I make it a point to eat one of the luscious little green fellows, with a blood-red interior, every day immediately after the soup. This has got to be a matter of conscience with me. The water melons are much like our own, and about the same price; but the musk melons are greatly inferior to those of New York. The peaches seem to be merely tolerable. Notwithstanding this, fruits are abundant, and,

so far as the markets are concerned, better than ours; though he who judges of the fruits of New York from the public-houses and the markets, knows nothing about them. We have tried the ices in the Toledo, and, notwithstanding their reputation, think them greatly inferior to those of other towns we know. Curtois need not hide his head in comparison with anything, in the way of simple creams, that are to be found in Europe. But I have found good coffee in one café here, and it is the first I have found in Italy. The house is kept by a Frenchman.

Naples and New York lie within a few miles of the same latitude. There are marked differences between the climates, certainly; and yet there are also, at this season in particular, marked points of resemblance. Our proximity to the West Indies gives us some advantages as regards the markets, as does the mixed character of our temperature. I believe America to be almost the only country in which the peach and apple come to perfection in the same field without resorting to forcing.

The streets of Naples at night are like our own, or rather like one or two in America, when there is a bright moon, and there has been a warm day. The absence of side-walks here, and the greater throngs, make the difference. But I know no place that offers a scene like this towards the setting of the sun. Imagine the effect in a street, or perhaps on the side of a hill, where the houses are six or seven stories in height, the windows all opening on hinges, and having balconies, and these balconies filled with people enjoying the cool air. I have literally seen streets with scarcely a balcony unoccupied. Fancy also the pleasure of sitting in such a spot, at such an hour, and overlooking a town like Naples, and such a bay! Most of the houses that face in the right direction, and which stand on the hill-sides, possess this advantage.

The common public vehicle for single passengers is a sort of sulky, which is driven by the passenger, the keeper standing behind him and using the whip. It goes with great velocity; and what struck me as daring in streets so

crowded and with chance drivers, the horses have no bit, being entirely controlled by a nose-band, like a halter, to which the reins are attached.

The population of Naples is generally short, and both sexes, as a rule, incline early to obesity. This applies particularly to the class of the *bourgeoisie*. But I have never seen so fine a display of muscle anywhere else as among the labourers of this place. The habit of ascending and descending the precipices of the coast gives to all the porters on the bay an extraordinary developement of the muscles of the legs. Those of Genoa have a reputation in this respect; but I think them, though of larger proportions in general, inferior to those of Naples, or rather of the Bay of Naples.

LETTER XIV.

Subterraneous Communications between the Houses of Sorrento and the Sea.—The Sala.—View from the Terrace.—Communication with Naples.—Marine Baths.—Excursions in the Neighbourhood.—Capo di Monte.—Anecdote of Beggars.

WE did not get into our residence at Sorrento until the 20th of August, and here we have now been several weeks. Everybody is delighted with the place, and I think we have not in any other abode, in or out of Europe, enjoyed ourselves so much as in this. The house is not particularly elegant, though large; but as it has a name, and may be taken as a specimen of an Italian country abode, I shall describe it.

To begin at the foundation, ours rests on narrow shelves of the cliffs, which just at this spot are about one hundred and fifty feet in

perpendicular height, or possibly a little more. It has a treacherous look to see the substratum of a building standing on a projection of this sort; but I presume sufficient care has been taken for security. Of this substratum I know but little, though there appear to be two or three stories down among the cliffs. All the dwellings along these rocks, many of which are convents, have subterraneous communications with the sea, the outlets being sufficiently visible as we row along beneath the heights. The government, however, has caused them to be closed, without distinction, to prevent smuggling.

The house forms two sides of a square, one running inland, and the other stands on the extreme verge of the cliffs, as you will readily understand when you remember that the foundations rest in the places I have just mentioned. We occupy the principal floor alone, although I have taken the entire house. There is a chapel beneath the great *sala*, and I believe there are kitchens and offices somewhere in the lower regions; but I have never visited any

portion of the substratum but the chapel. We enter by a gate into a court, which has a well with a handsome marble covering or curb, and a flight of steps fit for a palace. These two objects, coupled with the interest of Tasso's name, have been thought worthy of an engraving. From the *loggia* of the great stairs we enter into an ante-room of good dimensions. Inland is a still larger room, in which we dine, and another within that again, which is the only apartment in the house with a fireplace. By the presence of the chimney, it is fair to presume the kitchen is somewhere at hand. This room W—— has for a bedroom. Seaward, two or three vast ante-chambers, or rooms *en suite*, lead to the *sala*, which faces the water, and is a room fifty feet long, with width and height in proportion. The furniture is no great matter, being reduced to the very minimum in quantity; but it is not unsuited to the heat of the climate and a *villeggiatura*. There are old-fashioned gilded couches and chairs, and a modern divan or two to stretch our limbs on. There are also

some medallions and busts, antiques: one of the former, on what authority I cannot say, is called an Alexander the Great. The windows of the *sala* open on the court; a street that leads among convents winds toward the great landing and the bay.

Towards the water there is a little terrace, which forms the great attraction of the house. It is only some fifty feet long, and perhaps half as wide; but it hangs over the blue Mediterranean, and, by its position and height, commands a view of three fourths of the glorious objects of the region. It has a solid stone balustrade to protect it, massive and carved, with banisters as big as my body. This renders it perfectly safe, as you will understand when I tell you that, hearing an outcry from P—— the other day, I found him with his head fast between two of the latter, in a way that frightened me as well as the youngster himself. It was like being embedded in a rock.

As I sit at the foot of the dinner-table, I look, through a vista of five large rooms, by means of doors, directly at the panorama presented by

Naples, which town lies directly across the bay, at the reputed distance of eighteen miles; though I see St. Elmo so distinctly, that it appears not half so far. Of course, when seated on the terrace, the view is infinitely more extended. The sea limits it to the west. Ischia, dark, broken, and volcanic, but softened by vegetation and the tints of this luxurious atmosphere, comes next: then Procida, low, verdant, and peopled. The misty abrupt bluff of Mycenum is the first land on the continent, with the Elysian fields, the port of the Roman galleys, and the "Hundred Chambers." The site of delicious Baiæ is pointed out by the huge pile of castle that lies on the hill-side, and by the ruined condition of all the neighbouring objects of curiosity, such as the Sibyl's cave, the lake of Avernus, the bridge or mole of Agrippa. Behind a little island called Nisida, the bark of St. Paul must have sailed when he landed at Puteoli, on his way to Rome. The palace of Queen Joan, the grotto of Pausilippo, the teeming city, and the bay dotted with sails, follow. Then the eye passes over a broad expanse of rich level

country, between Vesuvius and the heights of the town. This is the celebrated Felicia Campania, with Capua in its bosom; and the misty background is a wall of broken rocks, which in form are not unlike our own palisadoes, but which, a grand range of the Apennines, have probably six or seven times their height. These mountains, at times, are scarcely visible, just marking the outline of the view in a sort of shadowy frame, and then, again, they come forth distinct, noble, and dark, the piles they really are. On particular days they do not appear to be a dozen miles from us. I have seen them already, more than once, glittering with snow, when they are indeed glorious. The base of Vesuvius, a continued hamlet of white edifices, including palaces and cottages, with its cone for the background, follow; and a pile of dingy earth, or ashes, just marks the position of Pompeii.

There is a little room partitioned off from the terrace, that I use as a cabinet, and where I can sit at its window and see all these objects. The distance impairs the effect but little; for so

great is the purity of the atmosphere, at times, that we have even fancied we could hear the din of Naples across the water. In all this, too, I have said nothing of the movement of the bay, which is getting to be of great interest.

Our communication with Naples is daily, and exceedingly regular. Large boats, carrying a single latine sail, and, at need, pulled by fifteen or twenty oars, leave all the places on this side of the bay with the dawn, at which hour there is almost always a wind from the northward. They make the passage sometimes in two hours, and it is usually made in four. About noon, the zephyr springs up, and we see our little fleet bearing up from under the town, spreading as it advances, one steering in this direction, another in that; for there are a dozen havens, or landings, on our side of the bay. We usually get the papers and letters by two o'clock. I have one boatman in pay, and this man brings me even dollars with rigid honesty.

We are in the midst of antiquities. The foundations of a large edifice are visible in

the limpid water, directly beneath the terrace. They are said to have belonged to a temple of Neptune, and there are caverns in the cliffs, at no great distance from these ruins, which are supposed to have belonged to them, for they have evidently been intended for baths. We appropriate them to their ancient use, seldom suffering a day to pass without bathing in them. The place can only be approached with a boat, and we go in a body, there being accommodations for us all. A large circular cavern, arched like an oven, is the room of the ladies. The water passes in and out of it, by means of two channels cut in the rock (tufa), and an orifice serves for a window. There is a seat cut in the stone all round the circle, and a beautiful soft sand has collected on the bottom, so as to render the water of the desired depth. A ship might float against the cliffs on the outside. I land the ladies at the window, where there is sufficient room to receive them and to answer the purposes of the toilette, and then I pull round to the entrance of the gallery by which the sea enters. This gallery is crooked,

of sufficient height to walk in, and has a narrow *trottoir* by the side of the water, along which one can walk. About midway between the sea and the circular bath, is a deep cut about twelve feet long and half as wide, and five feet deep. This is my bath, while W—— has one near the entrance; both of us occasionally striking out into the bay. All these works are artificial, perfectly retired; and you may fancy what a luxury it is to bathe daily in sea-water, sheltered from all eyes, as well as from the sun. The circular bath is about fifty feet in diameter, and twenty in height above the water. We have a little difficulty in landing sometimes, on account of the sea; but it is not one day in ten that we cannot effect it.

Carriages here are nearly useless. There is but a single wheel-track, of a few miles in extent; and that runs, the whole distance, through villages, or between high dead walls. When we wish to make excursions on the land, we walk in the ravines that form the ditches of the place, a most picturesque and remarkable promenade, or we take to the adjacent hills. Some-

times donkeys are commanded, but we usually prefer our own feet.

On the water we do better still. I have a good and safe boat, that one man can pull with ease, and in which W—— or myself commonly pull the family for an hour or two, under the cliffs, of an afternoon, or when the bay near us is in shadow. Then there is a handsome pinnace with two lug sails and six oars, that can be had any day for a dollar. In this we cross the bay, or go to Pompeii. For longer excursions, I get the *Divina Providenza*, one of the crafts that ply to Naples. This vessel, in which we have weathered a heavy gale, is pulled by twenty oars in a calm, sails fast, and costs me just five Neapolitan dollars a day!

Our daily excursions under the cliffs are peculiarly Italian. We cannot move until the day is drawing towards a close; but about four, the shadows of the rocks are thrown so far on the water as to form a complete protection against the rays of a fierce sun. At that hour, too, it is commonly a flat calm, and we glide along sometimes with a boatman, but oftener by ourselves, as far as

a rocky point, where are the ruins of a palace, or of a temple, (tradition has it both ways,) and where, by rowing through a rocky arch, we can enter a little haven of a very extraordinary character. At this place the boat is almost in a cavern. Here we land and get new views of the unrivalled bay. Every excursion that we make, we return more and more delighted with the region in which we dwell, and deriding the opinions of those who pass eight or ten days on the Chiaja, or in Santa Lucia, running from sight to sight at any season of the year that may offer, and then go away fancying they have seen the country of Naples!

There is a good deal of the "*dolce far niente*" in all this; but it is a feeling admirably suited to this luxurious climate, and to a country of recollections. In other places one is obliged to submit to much toil and some privation, in order to see many objects of curiosity; but they are assembled around the noble amphitheatre of this bay in such numbers, that one is only obliged to turn his head to get a view of them If more curious, he can ap-

proach them in a boat, shaded by an awning, without at all deranging the "*far niente.*"

And yet we as much affect the inland walks, as this lazy navigation. Our excursions are of two sorts, which may be divided into the "donkey" and the "non-donkey." In the "non-donkey," we roam over the hills near the town, which are covered with fruit-trees, and are intersected with paths, the kind and gentle peasants smiling as we pass, and never offering rudeness of any sort.

There is a spot called *Capo di Monte*, a term that always designates the best look-out of a neighbourhood, from which I think one finds the prettiest bit of scenery, in its way, I have ever met with; nor do I remember any picture that surpasses it. The landings on this coast are necessarily made on some small beach, or at a ravine which admits of an ascent to the plain, or *piano*, above. At Sorrento there are two, the "large" and the "little" landing.* The latter is in the heart of the town, and

* "*Marina Grande*," and "*Marina Piccola*," or the "*Marinella.*"

has a sort of wharf, at which one can embark in smooth water. This is the port of the *Divina Providenza*, but all the craft, big and little, are hauled on the beach at night; the other is a crescent of sandy beach, lined the whole distance with the houses of fishermen. It is at the verge of the town and without its walls, extending to the mountain, which here juts out into a low promontory, forming a protection against the sea. The *Capo di Monte* is so placed as to have this landing for its foreground. The view of the beach strewed with crafts of different sizes, including boats, to the number of a hundred, — the domestic groups between them and the houses, — the children sporting on the sands, the costumes and flaring colours of the female dresses, with nets spread to dry, and all the other little accessories of such a spot that you can so readily imagine,— make of themselves a perfect Flemish picture. The men usually have a shirt and loose trowsers that descend but little below the knee; and they wear a Phrygian cap, that is oftener red than any other colour. The pleasure of

a residence in such a spot is enhanced by the circumstance that, on the continent of Europe generally, the inhabitants of these country towns, though they are often large, seldom affect the airs of a capital, but are mere assemblages of rustics, and not children in wigs and hoops, like those of our own small places. Here, the distinctions between a capital, a country town, a village, and a hamlet, are all freely acknowledged and maintained; but the aspiring qualities of our population will not submit to this.

The great number of beggars that torment one like gnats was at first a drawback on our pleasures. It was no unusual thing to have a dozen of them in chase; and, if unprovided with change, we were often harassed by them until we returned to our own gate: for the poor Neapolitans, unlike the beggars of Paris, are not often provided with change. We have got relieved from them, however, by mere accident; and as the incident is characteristic, it is worth mentioning.

Walking one day on the terrace that over-

hangs the bay, I happened to cast my eyes over the balustrade into the street, where there is a public seat that is much frequented by idlers, immediately beneath our *drawing-room* window. It was occupied at the moment by an old fellow with a lame leg, as fine an old mendicant as one shall see in a thousand. This man was enjoying himself, and keeping an eye on the gate, in expectation of our daily sortie; for we had been a little irregular of late, and had given our tormentors the slip. Seeing me, the beggar rose and pulled off his cap. As I had no change, I called a servant to bring me a *grano*. This little ceremony established a sort of intercourse between us. The next day, the thing was repeated. As I usually wrote in the cabinet of a morning, and walked on the terrace at stated hours, my new acquaintance became very punctual; and there is such a pleasure in thinking you are making a fellow-creature comfortable for a day at so cheap a rate, that I began to expect him. This lasted ten days, perhaps, when I found *two*, one fine morning, instead of the *one* I had known.

The other *grano* was given, and the next day I had *three* pensioners. These three swelled like the men in buckram, and were soon a dozen. From that moment no one asked charity of us in our walks: we frequently met beggars, but they invariably drew aside, modestly, permitting us to pass without question. We might have been a month getting up to the dozen; after which, my ranks increased with singular rapidity. Seeing many strange faces, I inquired of Roberto whence they came; and he told me that many of the new visiters were from villages five or six miles distant, it having been bruited that, at noon each day, all applicants were accommodated with a *grano* apiece by the *American admiral.* By this fact alone, you learn the extreme poverty of the poor and the value of money in this country.

We went on recruiting, until I daily reviewed some forty or fifty *gaberlunzies.* As my time here is limited, I have determined to persevere, and the only precaution taken is to drive off those who do not seem worthy to be enrolled on a list so eminently mendicant; for a good

many of the wives of the fishermen began to appear in our ranks. A new-comer from Sta. Agata, a village across the mountains, had the indiscretion lately, as he got his *grano,* to wish me only a hundred years of life. "A hundred years!" repeated the king of the gang; "you blackguard, do you wish a signore who gives you a *grano* every day, only a hundred years? Knock him down! away with him!" "*Mille anni, signore,* — a thousand years; may you live a thousand years!" shouted the blunderer, amid some such tumult as one would see around a kettle of maccaroni in the streets of Naples, were its contents declared free. "A thousand years, and *long* ones too."*

* The writer kept up his mendicant corps until he left Sorrento, there being no less than ninety-six paraded in the court the day he departed. Many of these poor people came ten miles! Some of them, he was told, passed the last week of his residence in Sorrento, in order to receive the pittance more at their ease.

LETTER XV.

Aquatic Excursions. — The Weather. — Voyage' of St. Paul. — Shore of Baiæ.—The Solfatara.—Relics of Antiquity.—Shores of Avernus. — The Sibyl's Cave. — Ischia. — Fairy Scene. — Italian Nature. — Our Villa. — Procida. — Elysian Fields. — Roman Remains. — Sail for Pausilippo.

OUR aquatic excursions have extended, by this time, to the whole coast of the bay. We have visited all the islands, and nearly every object of interest, from Ischia to Capri. As some of the pictures may amuse you, we will make a short cruise in company over the same ground.

We embarked at the *Marina Grande*, in *La Divina Providenza*, with our twenty-one oars (the odd one falling to the share of the padrone), and your humble servant at the helm. The day had just opened, and the bay was radiant, while all the mountains stood out distinct and

clear. This was a sign of northerly weather, and of a pure sky. We had now been more than a month on the bay, and scarcely a drop of rain had fallen. At our first arrival, we had frequently distrusted the day; but our acquaintances laughed at the omens, and told us to go forth in security, on occasions when I should have expected a thunder-shower. The advice is good, and in no instance have we suffered. As the season advances, however, we perceive symptoms of change, and we are told that, ere long, we shall see rain.

Our boatmen made the water foam, and we soon saw the dark pile of Capri looking out from behind the western headland, and the shore of Massa. When one is at Naples, this fine island appears to lie directly in the mouth of the bay; but, in fact, it is posted, like a sentinel, at one of its corners, and Ischia is at the other.

Our course was north-westerly, for the headland of Pausilippo, which lay about eighteen miles distant, directly across the bay. We pulled several miles before we caught the land-

breeze, which soon sent us in under the romantic coast for which we were steering. Passing between Pausilippo and Nisida, the island that is said to have been the temporary retreat of Brutus after the death of Cæsar, we hauled up into the little bay beyond, which is that of Baiæ. Here the town of Pozzuoli stands, on a low projection into the water. There is little, perhaps no doubt, that this is the Puteoli of Paul. I thought of this apostle and of his perilous voyage as we rounded to at the quay, and pictured to myself the sort of vessel in which he had arrived, nearly eighteen centuries since, in the same harbour. She was called the Castor and Pollux, (what a thing to know even her name!) the ship of Alexandria, that had wintered in Melita, and which put into Syracuse, where she lay three days. Thence "we fetched a compass, and came to Rhegium." This is the Reggio of Lower Calabria, which lies nearly opposite to Messina. "And after one day, the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli." We learn some curious facts by the simple narrative of the apostle.

He sailed, first, in a ship of Adramyttium, bound to some port that lay on the way to Rome. This was a regular convoy of prisoners; and we may gain some idea of the means of communication between the different parts of the empire, and of the relative insignificance of Jerusalem, at that period, by the circumstance that no direct conveyance offered. It has been objected to the authenticity of the Books of the Apostles, that the Roman writers did not speak of Christ. That the Jewish writers did not, (the well-known allusion of Josephus being generally admitted to be an interpolation,) must be ascribed to his appearance conflicting with their own notions of the Messiah. There certainly *was* a sect called Christians, who took their origin from a reputed Christ, and these facts *must* have been known to the contemporary Hebrews, and yet *they* are silent. But with the Romans it was different. The means of communication were so few, and Jerusalem was so unimportant in the eyes of the mistress of the world, that the philosophers who prided themselves in an elaborate system

of mythology, in which an attempt is made to personify the attributes of the Deity,—a system that bears some such mystified relation to divine truths, as the black-letter notions of an old-school lawyer bear to abstract justice,—did not think such provincial opinions of sufficient interest to occupy their time and attention. On this point an error is sometimes committed by confounding the importance of Christianity at a later day, with the importance previously to, and immediately after, the Crucifixion.

Paul was put into a ship of Alexandria, in "Myra, a *city* of Lycia." At Lasea in Crete, they put into port, although the vessel was large enough to hold two hundred and seventy-six souls. Here there were serious notions of wintering! When they did put to sea again, it was merely with the intention of running as far as Phenice, another port in the same island. They took a moment to do this, when "the south wind blew *softly*," but were "caught" by the gale, that drove them up into the Adriatic, as is commonly thought, but into what was, more probably, no more than the

Ionian sea. When they struck soundings, "four anchors" were let go by the stern. There are still relics of this usage, the smaller craft carrying many light anchors. I have seen as many as eleven on the deck of one small bark on the Lake of Geneva, and seven or eight are the common number. They lie in a row bristling on the forecastle. Anchoring by the stern is an old expedient: Nelson did it at the Nile. These anchors, however, are a proof that the vessel, notwithstanding her "two hundred three score and sixteen souls," was small; as was also the fact that the crew, who were about to desert, were lowering *the* boat under the plea of carrying out anchors from the bows in a gale of wind!

The seamen of the Mediterranean appear to have had the same practice of running into port, at every adverse turn of the wind, in the time of St. Paul, that they have to-day. An ordinary run from Palestine to Puteoli, in a good ship, would not exceed six or eight days, and here we find men wintering by the way, and putting into half a dozen ports, besides

attempting to make several they could not enter. The ships of Alexandria were probably among the best of the sea, and yet even the one in which Paul arrived saw fit to winter in Malta, bound to Italy!

We passed close to a fragment of the ancient mole, which is commonly called the Bridge of Caligula, and which probably was used as a part of it; but I thought more of this arrival of Paul, as the different objects presented themselves, than of the luxury of Rome, and of all her emperors united. "Where are the doctrines that Saul of Tarsus taught, and where now is Rome!"

The whole shore of Baiæ is a succession of antiquities, or of natural curiosities. Puteoli, judging from its remains, was a place of some size; and this is the more probable from its proximity to the Baiæ shore, a spot devoted to taste and poetry. We saw the remains of the amphitheatre, and of various temples; but the ruins were indistinct, and much dilapidated. We walked, also, to the Solfatara, which may be termed the pulse of Vesuvius. When

it is quiet, the mountain is deemed dangerous; but when it is in action, the volcano is thought to be in subjection. The distance between the two cannot be less than fifteen miles. This is a sort of low crater, out of which smoke and heat escape through cracks in the surface, rather than by a regular orifice. The surface is not unlike that of a brick-yard; and a large stone cast on it, gives a hollow menacing sound. The idea of breaking through into a mass of burning sulphur accompanies the experiment, though the crust is really too thick to make it at all dangerous.

In the Solfatara, we were joined by Mr. Hammett, the consul, who had come from Naples by land, to join our party. To this gentleman, whose education and long residence in Naples so well qualify him for the office, we have been indebted for a great deal of local information, and information that we prize the more as it is always, on such occasions, to exchange the marvels of *laquais de place*, for the more accurate and chastened knowledge of a gentleman.

With this addition to our party, we re-embarked, and pulled across the bay, the distance of a mile or more, to the Lucrine Lake. The water was smooth as a mirror, and as our swarthy people, each of whom stood with his face towards the bows of the sparranara, pushed their heavy oars, I could almost fancy we were in a Roman galley, passing from one villa of Baiæ to another. It is scarcely possible to imagine a region that was once so renowned for its luxury and magnificence,—so teeming with historical associations, temples, palaces, baths, bridges, groves, and gardens,—that has more completely changed its character, than this. Of remains, and those of a nature to establish localities, there are abundance. It might be difficult to find another place in Italy, out of Rome, where so many are crowded into so small a space; but they are hidden, require to be sought, and all the glories of the past, so far as mere outward appearances are concerned, are completely supplanted by the present negligent and half-wasted aspect of the whole shore. The Lucrine Lake has almost disappeared, little re-

maining beyond a sort of pond in the sands; but, in its place, a natural curiosity has thrust itself, which serves strangely to add to the jumble of wonders that this extraordinary district offers. It is a small cone, or mountain, of volcanic embers and sand, which was forced upwards by a convulsion of nature, in 1538, and which is properly enough, in such a neighbourhood, called *Monte Nuovo*. It may be two or three hundred feet high, and has a sterile, naked look, the meagre verdure it possesses being altogether of a different hue from that of the rest of the soil. We can see this cone from the terrace at Sorrento.

We did not stop at the Lucrine to eat oysters, but followed a tangled path, between the upstart hill, and some of the more venerable heights that once groaned beneath palaces and Roman villas, to the shores of Avernus. Why Virgil chose this spot as the entrance to hell, I cannot tell you; unless it were for its reputed depth. It is a circular sheet of dark water, with shores that rise on every side except that by which we approached, and

which are deserted and tangled. The ruins of a temple stand in the solitude, erected, it is said, in honour of Pluto.

Agrippa is said to have cut a canal from this lake to the sea, in order to form a port. The cost of such an undertaking at present would not be great, and it would make one of the best men-of-war harbours in the world; easy of access and of defence, and as snug as a *boudoir*. But to need a harbour, a people must have ships.

The path conducted us to the Sibyl's Cave, a long narrow cavern cut in the rocks, beneath the palaces and villas, and which leads to nothing. These cuttings are curious as connected with the religious rites of antiquity, and Virgil probably had an eye to them in his descent to the nether world. We found a Styx within them, and seeing no Charon, but one who offered to carry us on his shoulders, we returned to try another route.

We retraced our steps to the beach, and visited some hot springs and remains of baths, which, right or wrong, have the reputation of

once belonging to a country palace of Nero. The frequent occurrence of ruins in all this region is to me a constant matter of wonder. They embrace all ages, down to our own. Here is a broken pile on a rock,—it is a retreat of Tiberius; that on the opposite peak was inhabited by some Goth. This is the dilapidated residence of a Bourbon; yonder is a fallen citadel of the barbarians; and temples to all the gods of antiquity, with remains of churches erected in honour of the Ancient of Days, dot the eminences and valleys!

We embarked and proceeded to Baiæ itself, a mere hamlet, to-day. Here are some tolerable remains, one in particular of a temple in honour of Venus, and also the heavy pile of citadel that is visible from Sorrento. We lingered on this site of Roman taste and indulgence several hours, and finding the day on the wane, bethought us of the coming night. The consul recommended Ischia, when we embarked with a light wind, and made sail in that direction. We glided immediately beneath Mysenum, which, for a novelty in this

part of the world, is a high *sandy* bluff; though all the Baiæan shore is more or less of sand. We looked into the little port, where the Roman galleys formerly lay, and whence Pliny departed when he proceeded to Statia, to meet his death from the volcano. It is a small circular haven, with a very shallow draught of water at present, the padrone saying that the *Divina Providenza* would find little enough for her wants. It was in part artificial, and the remains of the works are still distinctly to be traced.

We hauled up to windward of Procida, sailing through an element so limpid that we saw every rush and stone on the bottom in five fathom water. Having opened the channel between the two islands, we bore up for the town of Ischia, where we arrived a little before sunset. Here a scene presented itself which more resembled a fairy picture than one of the realities of this everyday world of ours. I think it was the most ravishing thing, in its way, eye of mine ever looked upon. We had the black volcanic peaks of the island for

a background, with the ravine-like valleys and mountain-faces, covered with country-houses and groves, in front. The town is near the southern extremity of the land, and lies along the shore for more than a mile on a bit of level formation; but, after passing a sort or bridge or terrace, which I took to be a public promenade, the rocks rose suddenly, and terminated in two or three lofty, fantastic, broken fragment-like crags, which make the south-eastern end of the island. On these rocks were perched some old castles, so beautifully wild and picturesque, that they seemed placed there for no other purpose than to adorn the landscape. By a curvature of the land, these rocks sheltered the roadstead, and the quaint old structures were brought almost to impend over our heads. The whole population seemed to be out enjoying themselves after the heat of the day, and a scene in which a movement of life was so mingled with a superb but lovely nature, it is indeed rare to witness. Until that moment I was not fully sensible of the vast superiority of the Italian landscapes over all others. Switz-

erland astonishes, and it even often delights, by its union of the pastoral with the sublime; but Italian nature wins upon you until you come to love it like a friend. I can only liken the perfection of the scene we gazed upon this evening to a feeling almost allied to transport; to the manner in which we dwell upon the serene expression of a beloved and lovely countenance. Other scenes have the tints, the hues, the outlines, the proportions, the grandeur, and even the softness of beauty; but these have the character that marks the existence of a soul. The effect is to pour a flood of sensations on the mind, that are as distinct from the commoner feelings of wonder that are excited by vastness and magnificence, as the ideas awakened by an exquisite landscape by Claude are different from those we entertain in looking at a Salvator Rosa. The *refinement* of Italian nature appears to distinguish it as much from that of other countries, as the same quality distinguishes the man of sentiment and intellect from the man of mere interests. In sublimity of a certain sort, more especially in the sublimity of

desolation, Switzerland probably has no equal on earth; and perhaps to this is to be added a certain unearthly aspect which the upper glaciers assume in particular conditions of the atmosphere; but these Italian scenes rise to a sublimity of a different kind, which, though it does not awe, leaves behind it a tender sensation allied to that of love. I can conceive of even an ardent admirer of Nature wearying in time of the grandeur of the Alps; but I can scarce imagine one who could ever tire of the witchery of Italy.

Climate has a great influence in bringing about these results. As the greater portion of the United States lies north of Naples, you may wish to know why we do not possess the same advantages. We want the accessories. A volcanic formation puts all competition at defiance in the way of the picturesque. This feature alone frequently renders mountains of no great elevation in themselves sublime, while others of twice their height are tame. We want the water, the promontories, the bays, the peninsulas, the grand islands, and lastly, we

want all the quaint and time-honoured forms that art assumed, in this region, three thousand years ago, seemingly never to abandon them.

Our attempts to obtain lodgings at the town of Ischia were unsuccessful, and we shaped our course for a villa on the coast two or three miles distant, where we were received. Our *coucher* was a little unsophisticated, most of the party using mattresses on the floor; but we had brought tea with us, and made a good supper. Italy pays the penalty for the warmth that is thrown around its landscapes, in having little milk, the article, of all others, in which its great rival Switzerland abounds. Wine can be had anywhere, as may oil; but the excellent tribute of the cow is hard to be got. We found maccaroni, however, which is as much a standing dish in Naples as rice in Carolina.

Arrangements for the night were soon made. Everybody had a mattress; though I afterwards found that Gelsomina slept in an open gallery, and Roberto in the cellar. The idea of putting two people in the same bed, even if married, scarcely ever comes into the heads of the Europeans of the Continent; nearly

every bed-room of the least pretension, if intended for the use of two, having its two beds. I have seen double-beds in Italy, it is true; but they were as large as small houses. That peculiar sentiment of the Western American, who "wondered that any man should be such a hog as to wish a bed all to himself," appears never to have suggested itself to a people so destitute of "energy."

We took a light breakfast, and left the shores of Ischia just as the sun rose. The island is volcanic, and blocks of lava, looking as fresh as that at the foot of Vesuvius, lie along the margin of the sea; and yet no tradition, or history, speaks of the volcano as active! These visible proofs of the imperfection of our records, and of the course of time, have a tendency to create new views of things. I am glad to hear that theologians and philosophers are beginning to see the possibility of reconciling the text of sacred history with the evidences of science, and to be of a mind in believing this world vastly older than the vulgar understanding of the Mosaic account has, hitherto, led us to

think. You are not to infer, however, that I believe the lava of Ischia so very ancient; the five thousand years will very well suffice for all the geological phenomena that I am acquainted with, and which lie on the surface of the earth.

The morning was calm, and we pulled towards the western point of Procida. This is one of the few islands of this region that is without any mountain. It is extremely populous, though quite small, having a good deal of shipping. We landed on the point, and, by way of exploring the island, walked to the town. It is the fashion to see a Greek character in this people, who were originally a Greek colony (as indeed were those on the adjacent main); but we saw no more than the same swarthy, dark-eyed race that throngs the streets of Naples.

Re-embarking at the port, we pulled towards the promontory of Mysenum, and landed behind the bluff, directing our galley to proceed and meet us near Baiæ. Nearly every foot of the shore, for several miles, was now historical, offering, amid a fatiguing sameness, and a ste-

rility of surface, some relic of antiquity. An ordinary traveller, in passing along this place, would see as little to please him, or to attract his attention, as in any part of Italy I know; and yet Pompeii itself is scarcely more pregnant with recollections. The Elysian Fields of Virgil are now a tangled brake; the *Mare Morto* is dead enough, and is scarcely worthy to be called a pool. Some imagine that the first was a place of interment for the wealthy, converted by the imagination of the poet into an arena of souls; and that the *sea* was merely an inner basin of the port of Mysenum, transformed by the same subtle process into the Styx. It is more probable that the imaginations of other people converted the Elysian Fields of the poet into this, and the inner basin, if inner basin it ever was, into his Styx. It struck me that the popular notions about this place are altogether too sublimated for a true poet, and that the popular genius, instead of that of Virgil, has been at work here.

The remains of the Romans are in better keeping. The Piscina Mirabile is a stupendous work, and almost perfect; and it puts all mo-

dern reservoirs to shame. It is under ground, vast, and contains arches and piers fit for the foundations of a palace. My respect for the Roman marine has never been very profound; but, if it be true that this place was intended to water their fleet, I know no modern nation that, under similar circumstances, would be likely to effect the same object on a scale so magnificent and noble.

The supposed prisons of the Hundred Chambers have the same character of vastness and durability. But everything Roman appears to be of this nature, and, in studying the remains, one is constantly provoked to make comparisons to the prejudice of us moderns. Were Naples to be deserted to-morrow, and this entire region depopulated, it is my opinion that they who visited the country a thousand years hence, would still find remains of the Romans, where every trace of the Neapolitans had disappeared. As for ourselves, the case is still worse. A period as short as that during which the country has been occupied, would probably obliterate every mark of our possession. We have a few forts, and a sea wall or two, that might

resist the wear of a few centuries; but New York would not leave a trace, beyond imperishable fragments of stone, in two hundred years. Something may be ascribed to climate, certainly; but more is owing to the grand and just ideas of these ancients, who built for posterity as well as for themselves.

After looking at ruins, if works almost as perfect as they were the day they were completed can be so termed, we embarked, and made sail for the point of Pausilippo, with a light but fair wind. The little island of Nisida, which once had its villas too, is now the Lazaretto, and was filled with *passagères* in quarantine. The breeze served to carry us half across the bay, and it then deserted us. Our galley put out its oars, and we swept in towards the cliffs, on as lovely an evening as ever fell on this *pezzo di cielo.* Just as the day closed, the black mass of Capri became shut in by the head-lands of Massa, and we approached the rocky shore of Sorrento beneath the light of a placid moon. Before nine, we were all safely housed in the *Casa detta del Tasso.*

LETTER XVI.

Capri.—Dread of Earthquakes.—Cruise to Pompeii.—The Sarno. — Approaching Squall. — Sorrentine Boatmen. — Siroccos.— Public Works. — Camaldoli Convents. — Islands of the Syrens.— A Sabbath Walk.— Monasteries on Hills. — Creature-Comforts.

To Capri we went in the six-oared pinnace. This island, which, as you know, stands sentinel at one side of the bay, as Ischia does at the other, seen from Naples appears to lie in its mouth. This is owing to the position of Naples itself, which is placed at the northern corner of the gulph; Vesuvius, as you have been already told, occupying the bottom. I repeat these things, for, my own notions having been all wrong about them, I have fancied yours might be so too.

Capri is divided into two mountains by a deep gorge, or valley, in which stands the town.

The southern mountain is the highest, and is truly a noble object, as one approaches the spot. It rises almost to a peak which is, probably, two thousand feet high; and the ruins that crown it are said to have belonged to a castle of Frederick Barbarossa, and to stand on the site of a villa of Tiberius! There is a tradition that Tiberius had many villas on this remarkable little island; which may be true, as there are numberless remains. At all events, the place was in favour among the Romans, Augustus passing much of his time here, towards the end of his career.

The lowest of the mountains is called Ana Capri, and can only be reached by actually ascending a flight of steps cut in the rocks, of half a mile in length, which ascend by a zigzag. P—— was mounted on a donkey; and, making a line of pocket-handkerchiefs, which I fastened to the girth, the ladies were greatly aided in this fatiguing ascent. The picturesque seems exhausted in such beautiful spots. Here we had the bay; the teeming and magnificent coast for leagues; the path, itself a curiosity,

with a little chapel, at which the devout were kneeling as we passed. A thousand recollections crowded on the mind. Among other beautiful objects, were the different crafts, of which a fleet lay becalmed under Vesuvius.

The English seized Capri, and held it for some time, while Murat was king. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to re-take it, and one finally succeeded, under Lamarque. That officer surprised the place by scaling the rocks of Ana Capri, in the night; and, once in possession of this elevated plain, he was in possession of the entire island.

We found Ana Capri a hamlet of cottages. Every building had the low circular roof of cement; and, like most of the houses of this region, those in the towns and the villas excepted, they were all of one story, like the buildings of Pompeii. A dread of earthquakes has probably introduced this style; though Naples has unusually high houses. Several streets of the capital, however, at this very moment, have beams between the buildings which are said to be departing from the perpendicular, in con-

sequence of the working of the fires beneath. One of these fine mornings, the whole of this "little bit of heaven fallen upon earth" will probably fall into the cauldron beneath it; and then travellers will come to see it as an object of frightful desolation! Such was probably the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah. I wonder if New York will ever experience a similar calamity.

Besides the cruise to Capri, we have made two to Pompeii, the first of which was attempted in a fresh breeze and a heavy sea. When we had got half way, W——, who, though a very bad sailor, swims like a fish, began to make some inquiries about the probability of his art being required in landing; when we learned from the boatmen that any attempt to approach the shore would most likely put us all in the water. I had been told we might ascend the Sarno, about a mile, to the ruins of the towns, and, quite like a mariner as I contend, had presumed on smooth water in port. It appeared, however, on inquiry, that there is a bar at the mouth, and that in a flat calm the rollers

sometimes make crossing it hazardous. Nothing remained but to down-helm, and haul up again for the Marina Grande. We were rewarded for the excursion, notwithstanding, by enjoying the bay in a tumult. The heavy seas that set into it, are not unlike those of the ocean in moderate weather; and, since the season has advanced into October, we have witnessed the waves dashing against our cliffs in a manner to send the spray upon the terrace.

The next expedition was better timed, and we reached the mouth of the river in good season. Here we found so little water, that the boat grounded a cable's length from the shore, and the only way to enter was for the crew to jump into the water, where, by watching the roll of the ground-swell, and lifting, they succeeded in forcing us over the bar.

The Sarno is about as wide as the Bronx at West-Farms, and much such a river. Like the Bronx, it meanders through low meadows, all of which have probably been formed since the destruction of Pompeii. We could not

get quite up to the town, as it was; but, leaving the boat, we walked, by a footpath, to the highway, entering the ruins on the side of the tombs. In this visit we examined the walls, and entered more into details than at the former. The progress of the workmen had been slow; but an entire house, and that of some importance, had been opened in the interval. I endeavoured to find some traces of the port, unsuccessfully; but, judging from the present appearance of the country, I think there can be little question that the town stood on a low promontory, and that the haven lay considerably below it. Excavations in the right spot would very probably bring to light a mole.

We left Pompeii, on this occasion, an hour sooner than we should otherwise have done, on account of an approaching gust. For nearly two months, and this in August and September, we had seen nothing resembling a storm in the bay, and scarcely any rain. Indeed, I can safely say, after having now passed near a twelvemonth on this side the Alps, that I have witnessed neither thunder nor lightning that

would attract any attention in America. This may have been a peculiar season; but, after all I had been told, especially by the English, I had expected something of the sort particularly awful. While we were among the ruins, however, there was every symptom of something better than common in this way, or certainly better than anything we had yet seen; and fearing a swell would get up on the bar, I hurried the party off to the boat.

We got out of the Sarno better than we had come into it, and were soon in the bay. The wind was light at the north-west, and as we stretched over, under the promontory of Vico, the heavens in the direction of Pausilippo became lowering and grand. A polacre was beating out of the bight of Castel-a-mare, and was tacking, about half a league to windward of us. Just as she filled, with her head to the northward, I observed that she was starting her tacks and sheets, or whatever else these nondescript craft term their gear. I ordered our own lugs to be taken in, and the oars shipped. It was a grand moment, for I scarcely

remember a more beautiful opening of a gust, and the effect was greatly increased by the sublimity of the surrounding land. As for the bay itself, it reminded me of a beauty covered with frowns. The water curled and foamed, but retained its limpid blue; and there were openings between the lurid and wheeling clouds through which the void of heaven gleamed brightly, and of its deepest tint, giving one the idea of nature in a mask.

The stroke-oarsman of the boat advised me to pull in under the promontory, as near as we could go. I hesitated about complying, for the sea was getting up fast, and if we found it irresistible, there was no alternative but drowning; for the rocks impended over the water almost to the height of a thousand feet. This noble pile is, in truth, one of the finest objects in its way that I know on any coast. The man, however, explained himself. He said, that the squall would not blow "home," against the rocks, and that, contrary to the general rule, we should find smoother water, and less wind, by running lee-ward. As this was plausible, and

matters were becoming awkward where we were, I followed his direction, and in a few minutes we were as close under the beetling precipice as we could conveniently go. I confess I had doubts of the experiment; but it succeeded perfectly. We got ahead with tolerable speed, had no other than a fair rolling sea, and came out handsomely into the bay of Sorrento within half an hour. I was not sorry, notwithstanding, when I again saw the polacre showing his light sails to windward.

With similar symptoms we should have been deluged with rain in America, and yet we were barely sprinkled. The wind was fresh inshore, and violent a league or two in the offing; for the polacre bore up to it, until she had run a mile or more; and yet we did not ship a gallon of water, or "catch crabs" with a single oar. These Sorrentines are noble boatmen, as bold and as skilful as any I have ever met with; athletic, active and steady, while they understand their waters perfectly. Much as I have boated with them, and on two or three occasions I have seen them in serious weather,

I have never seen any praying to saints, or a disposition to do anything unworthy of mariners. I consider the common population of this country, by nature, one of the finest I know.

The weather, soon after this excursion, changed, and interrupted our boating. The siroccos set in, in earnest, and for two or three weeks we had a continuation of strong south winds, occasionally accompanied by rain. The influence of these winds is one of the great drawbacks on an Italian residence. I can tell in my bed if there is a shift of wind to the westward, and no language can describe the cheering effect the changes produce on my feelings. We have had one or two days, in which the house has actually appeared to roll with me, like a ship at sea; and the depression of the spirits, at such times, is really awful—second only to a London November-day.

This is the season in which the vessels arrive from Sicily, and the other southern ports, with wheat. For a fortnight there was scarcely a day in which a dozen, and sometimes twenty

sail, did not pass directly before us; for they haul close round the Cape of Campanella, and run into Castel-a-mare, where the great warehouses of the kingdom are placed. Some of the public works of this nature are on a scale that is vast for the extent and commerce of the nation. There is a single storehouse on the bay, by the side of the road that leads from Naples to Portici, designed to be used in cases of quarantine, I believe, that is one of the largest constructions I have ever seen. Its length cannot be much less than half a mile. I counted the windows, and, estimating the distance between them, made it out to be considerably more than two thousand feet. But Europe is full of buildings that to us appear marvellous by their magnitude and riches, and Italy, in particular, before all other parts of it.

The passage of these vessels gave an entirely new appearance to our side of the bay; and the daily arrival of our own little fleet, which sometimes comes staggering along half under water, adds to the interest. Roberto went to Naples a few days since, on business of his own, and

he became so thoroughly frightened by the fury of our lovely bay, that the poor fellow, in preference to running the same risk over again, actually made a *détour* of forty miles, by the way of Castel-a-mare and the mountains, in order to get back again to his duty. But the *Bella Genovesa* can testify that he is a miserable sailor.

Our siroccos have not been perpetual, but some glorious autumnal days succeeded the equinox. We have profited by them to explore the interior of the peninsula on which we live, for the heat can now be borne even at noonday. You would laugh to see us start on one of these excursions. Half a dozen little donkeys are paraded at the gate, with two or three swarthy drivers. As soon as the ladies are seated on their beasts, in a species of pack-saddle, W—— and I mount, with our feet just clear of the ground, and away we go, by dint of kicks, thumps, and applications on the flanks from the drivers. Once in motion, we are by no means certain of the direction; for if urged beyond their humours, the little long-eared

gentry will put their noses down, and carry one of the ladies just where he pleases. Cries of distress are constantly made; one being run into a church door, another into the window of a hovel, or a third is scampering down the road at a "will ye nill ye" pace. We had a good deal of this amusement for the first mile or two, after which we commonly get on better. No one thinks of laughing at our appearance; for it is as much expected that one should ride on a donkey here, as that one should ride on a horse with us.

We have been on all the heights in this manner. One of our visits was to a ruined convent, a *Camaldoli*, on the mountain that separates the *piano* of Sorrento from that of Vico. These *Camaldole* are always placed on heights; St. Bruno, the founder of the order, being directed by a dream, or a vision, I believe, to adopt the plan. The effect is poetical and good; for I cannot imagine a finer stimulant for religious meditation, than a broad view of the glories of the earth; and this the more especially, if it be chastened by a knowledge of the things prac-

tised on it. One gets, in this way, an idea of what things might be without sin to contrast with one's knowledge of what things are. In boyhood, my feeling was ever to fly from such places, in order to cull the beauties by again approaching them ; but, as life glides away, I find the desire to recede increase, as if I would reduce the whole earth to a picture in a camera obscura, in which the outlines and general beauties are embraced, while the disgusting details are diminished to atoms.

The view from the eminence north of the *piano*, like every other view in this region, is magnificent ; but one cannot go amiss, in this respect, in a country in which rocks, plains, water, mountains, and life, are blended in the affluence of Naples. The convent-buildings are chiefly destroyed, for there has been a great suppression of monastic orders in this country ; but the chapel still stands. It is used as a barn, and was half full of hay. Still the altar-piece, a very good picture, remains !

There is a seat on the verge of the cliff, that overlooks the plain of Sorrento, as one would

overlook a garden from the belvedere of a house, or a ship's decks from her mizen top. Here we were particularly struck with the resemblance of the houses to those of Pompeii, all the roofs being low, with the species of dome-like curvature, to turn the water, that has been before mentioned.

An excursion in the opposite direction proved to be still finer. We went up the heights, behind Sorrento, by a Swissish road, half stairs, half path, until we gained a country that had a more pastoral character than usual. A hamlet on the summit, that overlooked the Mediterranean towards the south, and at an elevation of near, if not quite, a thousand feet, is called St. Agata. Some small rocky islets, at no great distance from the coast, and around which the sleeping billows, in their incessant rolling, just raised a circle of white, are called the Islands of the Sirens; it being assumed that these are the Islands where Ulysses encountered those sea ladies; and one of them is said to contain the ruins of a temple. They are mere rocks, not larger than that on which we landed near Piombino. Can

these ruins once have been the abode of nymphs, who seduced the wanderer from his path, on anchoring accidentally near them?

There is another *Camaldoli* on the summit of the land, between St. Agata and Massa, or about mid-way between the Gulf of Salerno and that of Naples. I passed a morning lately in a memorable manner, in exploring it on foot, and alone. The day was fine, it was the Sabbath, the air from the west, invigorating, just cool enough to be agreeable, and full of life. The ruins command a noble view, as usual; but so does every eminence around us. One looks abroad here, in the full security of beholding objects that are either sublime or beautiful, and commonly both, for the two are so blended as to render it doubtful which most prevails. I cannot describe to you the precise nature of the sensations with which I passed this morning. It was the Sabbath of man, and it appeared to be also the Sabbath of nature; one of those holy calms that sleep on the earth, as if the vegetable world united with the animal to worship the great Source of all. As I flung myself

carelessly from height to height, and across downish uplands, every new point that presented itself exhibited the great temple in a new and lovelier aspect; and as I descended from the glorious solitude, (for the only habitations are in the hamlets, or on the plains,) I felt as if I could almost become a monk, in order to remain there for life. The conventual buildings were, as usual, vast, and much of them still remains. Had it been my fortune to suppress monasteries, I should certainly have commenced the work in the cities and on the plains, and have left those on the hill-tops to the last; for I have a difficulty in believing that the tenants of such abodes can do anything but adore God. At least, this is the passing feeling; though I dare say one gets to be *blasé* as respects a fine view, as well as a fine sentiment. At all events, we are pretty certain the devil can climb, as well as crawl: though most of our American devils, I believe, are of the *genus* demon, *species* reptile.

We never ramble in this manner without exclaiming against those who visit Naples,

perhaps in the bad season, pass a rainy week or two in sight-seeing, fagged and even fatigued with wonders, and then go away and pretend to describe its nature, its variety, its purity of atmosphere, its pearly lustre of sky, and all its other glorious peculiarities. The environs of Naples are quite another region to-day, than on that on which we arrived; though they have always been lovely. Even a sirocco cannot spoil their charms; for while, like other beauties, they have their good and bad-looking days, the last are merely the bad looks of a Venus. I have never seen the bay when it did not present an object of admiration and rare perfection.

You will be surprised to learn that we also riot here in the good things of this world, in the shape of creature-comforts. The liquor of the country is good, the lachrima christi of Vesuvius being really a choice wine. Then the beccafichi are delicious, and plenty at this season, Sorrento being the very nucleus of their sports: they cost a grano apiece! The quails, too, just now, are as good as can be, very plenty,

and quite cheap. They are caught in nets extended among the trees, flying in large flocks. By some caprice in the bird, Capri is a favourite stopping-place with them, and thousands are sent weekly to the market of Naples. By a caprice of man, these birds compose a material part of the revenues of the bishop,—at least so I hear; though I find it odd that so small an island should have a bishop at all. But Sorrento is an archbishopric; its diocesan is a learned man; and they tell me there are near a dozen bishops in the capital, and in its immediate neighbourhood.

While on this subject, I will mention that we have lately had a religious procession, in which an image of the Virgin has been made to take a more prominent part than I have ever before witnessed. She has gone from altar to altar, followed by half the pious of the town, among whom have figured nearly the whole of my corps of gaberlunzies. There are so many churches and convents in this small town, that an inhabitant whom I questioned lately had no

idea of their numbers. "There might be twenty, there might be fifty."

While walking on the terrace a few days since, I saw a priest coming up the road from the Marina Grande. He was accompanied by an ecclesiastic, who was chanting in concert with the father. A little distance behind these, came one of the swarthy bare-legged fishermen of the place, carrying on his head the usual flat willow basket, on which it is common to display the fish, and on which, it appeared to me, he then had his game. As he kept a short distance in the rear, I supposed he did not like to pass the others, who were engaged in some religious office. Curiosity induced me to watch the party, and, as it drew near, I discovered the chant was that of the dead. When near enough to be distinguished, I saw on the basket the body of a little girl about six years old. It was dressed in white, with gay ribands; and across its mouth lay an oblong nosegay, or what was more probably an imitation of a nosegay. The flowers contrasted strangely with the pallid colour of

death. I called to me a Sorrentine servant, and asked an explanation. The girl was the daughter of the fisherman, and this was literally *le convoi du pauvre.* It was even worse than the interment of the Isle of Wight, though the manner of the priest was more reverent. I was told the body would be taken to a church, stripped of its attire, and cast into a hole, in common with all who are interred in the same manner. *Cast* was the word; but it is to be hoped it was lowered. I did not go to see the process, for I particularly dislike obtruding the curiosity of a stranger on the religious ceremonies of a strange people. The rude and indifferent manner in which Protestants ordinarily violate the sanctity of Catholic worship, does quite as much discredit to those who practise, as to those who tolerate it; though, in the plenitude of self-complacency, we followers of Luther are a little too apt to throw all the blame on the latter. I believe pious Catholics are as much shocked by the practice, as pious Protestants would be, were the case reversed.

We have now followed this dreamy mode of life so many weeks, that, coupled with the invigorating airs of October, the desire to enter into a little more activity begins to beset us. Boating is a lazy occupation, unless one handles the oar; and even sight-seeing, usually an extremely laborious business, on the shores of this luxurious bay is deprived of half its wear and tear.

I have forgotten to mention, by the way, that our own house is one of the wonders of the district. Most travellers honour us with a call, much to the advantage of Roberto's pocket, for he acts as master of ceremonies. Luckily, there is nothing to show but the *loggia* and the stairs, which one passes in entering, the great saloon, and the terrace. The latter is worth the trouble of mounting a flight of steps to see, and I believe most of the curious go away satisfied. There is, however, a medallion in the great saloon that has the reputation of being an Alexander the Great. It is an antique, I believe; but how far it deserves to be called an Alexander, I cannot

say. It is the head of an enthusiast, rather than of a man of intellect; though I think one rarely finds any of the very magnificent bumps and foreheads about the truly distinguished. There are also a bust of Bernardo Tasso, the father of Torquato, and a medallion of Julius Cæsar, representing him as a youth. The Bernardo is probably authentic, as the family of the duke is said to be connected with that of Tasso; but Roberto shows the others, without remorse, as beyond cavil.

Of course we retire when the admirers of Tasso come to look at his residence; but taking a peep the other day at a visitor, I recognized a young Austrian, Baron ——, whom I had seen at Florence, and I went out to speak to him. We chatted together half an hour; and I mention the circumstance, because my companion betrayed a feeling that I find is very prevalent here, on the subject of the recent accession of General Jackson to the presidency. This feeling first discovered itself by some questions relative to the age of the new president; for when I mentioned that he was already an

old man, I thought my acquaintance was surprised, not to say disappointed. His expectation evidently was that our democracies had taken the predicted course, and that we were already tasting the sweets of a military despotism. A military despotism, forsooth, in a country containing 2,000,000 square miles of surface, and an army of 6000 men!

I found that the exaggerated, electioneering trash of the opposition prints at home had made an impression, and, as is usual with most men, that which was ardently desired was readily believed. It is not easy for one living in the retirement of America, for all America is but a *villeggiatura*, and Well Street worse than retirement, so far as the great political questions and knowledge of the day are concerned, compared with the activity, principles, and designs of Europe;—it is therefore difficult for one dwelling in the retirement of American life to form a correct notion of the opinions that float about here in reference to ourselves. An eminent Neapolitan, a man of singular shrewdness and of high political station, lately asked

me seriously, what was the object of the English in making their descent on Washington in 1814. As I supposed a *coup de main* of that nature, under the peculiar circumstances, spoke for itself, I was as much surprised at the question as he could possibly be with the answer; for when I explained to him that Washington at that time was an open, straggling village, of some eight or nine thousand souls, of whom a good portion were black slaves,—that it covered a surface of nine or ten square miles, without works and without a garrison,—and moreover that its capture would have no more influence on the result of the war, than the seizing and holding for twenty-four hours of any other inland place of the same magnitude, — he expressed his astonishment. I was given clearly to understand, that it was viewed differently in Europe; and, owing to the influence of our enemy, I now believe the war of 1812 is better known here by this useless expedition than by anything else, notwithstanding all our own notions of the matter.

You are to feel no surprise at this; for the

influence of England, at this very moment, singularly controls opinions in America itself, of which I have just seen an absurd proof, connected with this very subject. A New York journal, one of those patriotic organs of sentiment which are constantly sneering at the institutions, reserving their indignation and *energies* for the defence of the illustrious cats and dogs of the country, (which, by the way, are generally much inferior to the cats and dogs of Europe,) has just been quoting the statements of a British officer in relation to the campaigns of New Orleans and Washington, as proof that some of our own previous notions in reference to both were untrue. Now, this very officer who affirms he was at Washington, calls it a place, apparently, of about sixty thousand souls, and passes some architectural strictures on the wings and *main body* of the Capitol, the latter of which at that time had never been erected! Some of our people will swallow an English camel, when they strain at an American gnat.

LETTER XVII.

Excursion up Mount Vesuvius. — The Hermitage. — Difficulty of the Ascent. — Aspect of the Crater. — An ideal resemblance of the Entrance of the Infernal Regions. — Fit machinery for Virgil's epic. — Eruption of the Volcano. — Lovely panoramic view. — Descent from the Cone. — Russian Frigate. — No Marine efficient without National sympathy. — Battle of Navarino.

You may be surprised that I have said so little about Vesuvius. Notwithstanding my silence, we have not passed a day, scarcely an hour, unless at night,—and many hours of the latter even are an exception,—without having this beautiful mountain under our eyes. I say beautiful, for, including its base, loaded with towns, palaces, ruins, villages, and villas,—its sides seamed with ravines, and occasionally smiling with verdure, or dark with forests,—and its cone of cinders,—it forms altogether an object of great attraction. By day, there is usually a light cloud of smoke rising from the water,

and hovering above it; and by night, occasional flashes illumine the sky and the mouth of the mountain in a way that the fire of a forge brightens and sinks in the darkness. I do not think we have seen any positive flame; but of late we have had brighter gleamings from beneath than are usual.

The heat of the weather had hitherto prevented an attempt to ascend; but W—— and myself determined, not long since, that it was time to make the excursion. To this end we crossed the bay to Naples, and passed the night in town, having also an early start in view. Accordingly we drove to Portici, where we breakfasted. We then mounted our horses, under the protection of a guide of reputation, and proceeded. The ascent for four or five miles is gradual; the road, an indifferent one at the best, and nearly impracticable for wheels, leads at first through vineyards, then among copses, and often along water-courses, or across beds of ancient lava. The summit of the mountain is the cone of which I have spoken. Its form is regular, though the edges are broken, some por-

tions being much higher than others, though the side nearest Naples and the bay, just now, is tolerably even. I believe the perpendicular height of the lowest part of this cone is about eight hundred feet; though it varies materially at different times. From its base, a ridge runs in a westerly direction for the distance of a mile, when it falls away rapidly towards the plain. The form of this ridge is favourable for the ascent as well as for safety, since the land is lower near the cone than at its extremity, and before lava could flow on the latter, it would run down the sides of the ridge both north and south of it. On the extremity of this ridge, which forms a sort of inland promontory, stands the celebrated Hermitage.

We reached this place in less than three hours after quitting Portici, the ascent in its immediate neighbourhood being sharp, but not long. The building is a simple stone structure, with a small chapel connected; but it has all the peculiarities of a tavern, rather than of a religious residence. One who had the appearance of a monk lived there, and administered to our

wants, for which consolations we punctually paid. His whole manner was that of an official of the bar, rather than of the altar. In consequence of there having been a few robberies between the Hermitage and the cone, a small guard of soldiers was stationed at the former, with instructions to send one man with each party of travellers.

We remained half an hour at the Hermitage, took a cup of wine, and enjoyed the view, which was magnificent; but, as it was embraced in that from the crater, I shall not speak further of it here. There are some fine trees in front of the buildings, and, altogether, a lovelier spot could not be desired for a recluse. The distance, in an air line, between the summit and the Hermitage, must be about a mile; and although it *sounds* dangerous to live so near the crater, I would as soon be at this spot in an eruption, as in any of the towns at the base of the mountain, though these lie at five or six times the distance. A little explanation will render the matter clear. Lava, from which

most of the danger has arisen in modern times, *cannot* touch the Hermitage, on account of the formation of the ridge; and, as for the red-hot stones and cinders that are always flying into the air, they ascend in nearly perpendicular lines, and their descent is necessarily much the same. In point of fact, they rarely fall at any distance from the crater. It is these, indeed, of which the cone is entirely composed, and from the base of this cone the Hermitage is distant about a mile. The *quasi* hermit, therefore, is just that space out of the line of fire.

We left the latter on horseback, and rode near half a mile, by a pretty path, through a wood, and nearly on a level line. We then emerged upon a plain of lava, which lies materially lower than the wood, and from which the heated metal has evidently flowed north and south. This low plain serves as a ditch to the promontory or ridge of the Hermitage. No lava can possibly cross it until it is filled; an event not likely to happen soon, as the lava flows off at each side. Winding our way across it, we

soon came to its eastern margin, and dismounted. Here we left the horses, and prepared for the struggle that was to follow.

The ascent is rather steeper than the sides of a pile of gravel would be, supposing it to have been formed by the falling of the material on a given place, without a force sufficient to change its outline. It appeared to me to be at an angle of about fifty or fifty-five degrees with the plane of the horizon. As the cinders yield with the weight of a man, the foot sinking often to the instep, it is a severe task to get up this place. We went at it coolly, but steadily, stopping to take breath after short efforts; and I believe we were about twenty minutes in reaching the summit. The cinders were warm in spots, and a sulphurous smoke issued from the cone in a great many places that we passed. I was too experienced a traveller to run myself out of breath, as the moment of enjoyment approached. Having got within a few feet of the top, I paused to recover breath; poor W——, who had commenced with fury, being still a hundred feet beneath me. The guide waited my leisure; but

the guard, whose duty compelled him to go no further than the foot of the cone, but who, being on his first excursion, chose to ascend also, lay panting on the rim of the cone, or crater, as I put my foot by his side.

This was another novel and beautiful *coup d'œil.* As the place was very different from what I had expected to see, I shall endeavour to make you understand what it really is. It appeared to me that the depth of the great crater, at the place where we stood, was a little more than half of the descent of the cone itself, on its exterior; though its edge is ragged, and at one spot was two or three hundred feet higher than that which we had reached. This edge of the cone, or crater, overhung its sides in nearly the whole circuit, and the distance round it was near or quite a mile. It follows, that the diameter of the crater must be about a third of a mile. Its bottom was like a floor of clay, resembling that of the Solfatara, smoke issuing from its crevices. Vivid streaks of brimstone gave it wild, unnatural tints. It seemed quite as level as an ordinary brick-yard, viewed

from our stand. A little on one side of this circular plain, rose a small cone, which might be a hundred and fifty or two hundred feet high, formed of the same materials as the outer cone, with an orifice perhaps some eighty or a hundred feet in width. This was the living, or true crater. Out of this spot issued all the smoke, fire, stones, and cinders of the ordinary workings of the mountain, of which, in truth, it is the safety valve. This little haystack-looking cone was nearer to the eastern and southern edges of the great crater than to the northern and western, and it is altogether too low to be visible to any except those who ascend to the place we occupied. The red-hot stones must therefore be propelled upwards many hundred feet, perhaps six or eight, to be seen at Naples or Sorrento, where we have often seen them, however, of late.

The scene that broke upon us, as we arrived, was one of the most extraordinary I ever witnessed. At that instant an ordinary cloud enveloped the summit of the cone, shutting out the whole view, with the exception of the cra-

ter and the surrounding objects, and casting a sombre tint on everything. It is probable a few rays from the sun struggled through this vapour, which was not high above our heads, though it seemed to descend half way down the cone, for the streaks of sulphur looked brighter and more unnatural than afterwards. The yellow tint they cast around them, the unnatural, or rather supernatural effect, coupled with the gaping crater, the rumbling of the volcano, and the occasional explosions, combined to give the spot a resemblance to the entrance of the infernal regions. If I could fancy I was obtaining glimpses in at the glories and calm radiance of Heaven, when I looked upon the high Alps, looming above the Niesen and cut off from the lower world by a belt of vapour, I had no difficulty in now fancying that I stood on the threshold of hell. Virgil died about half a century before the volcano resumed its action, or he certainly would never have taxed his imagination to use the Lake Avernus, Mare Morto, and Elysian Fields of the Baian shore as machinery for his epic, when Vesuvius pre-

sented objects so much more worthy of the subject. The Campagna was as good an Elysian Field as heart could wish, and the crater a Tartarus equal to the epic. It is true, there is no Styx; but the monk I saw at the Hermitage would answer every reasonable purpose for a Charon.

The "*facilis descensus Averni*" would, also, have been physically true, supposing the crater always to maintain its present form; for the circuit of the rim, or upper edge, is not made without hazard, as poor W—— was near demonstrating, in the workings of some of his *goatisms*. The crater, however, changes its appearance at every great convulsion; though the one I have described, I am told, is its general character.

You may be surprised to hear it, but the volcano itself attracted very little of my attention for the first half-hour after we reached the edge of the crater; nor did it at any time, while on the mountain, fill the first place in my admiration, or even thoughts. Still it was not idle. Five minutes scarcely intervened

between the explosions, which were much greater than I had anticipated witnessing. They were preceded by a heavy rumbling, and went off like the puffs of a safety valve to a huge steam-engine, though unaccompanied by any hissing. The reports were not altogether unlike those of artillery; the blowing of a whale had also some resemblance: though neither of these noises was, in all respects, like that of the volcano. Stones were hurled several hundred feet into the air, and fell on or near the little cone, which was constantly growing by these accessions. Cinders, smoke, and flame accompanied each explosion. There were many minor reports, that sounded like the crackings of a great conflagration. Occasionally, large stones fell on the plane of the great crater, at some distance from the little cone; but, I think, any one upon it might easily have avoided them. They sounded, on the plain, like stones cast on the Solfatara.

We did not descend into the crater, though there was a spot where it might be done; but W—— was too much exhausted by the ascent,

and I saw little to be gained by it but the right to say we had done it. The explosions were so frequent as to render it impossible to ascend the little cone, and look into the real crater; the fate of Pliny menacing all who did it, as the vapour was constantly rising in sudden and violent puffs, inhaling which would probably have been fatal.

My principal enjoyment, moreover, proceeded from the view, with its extraordinary contrasts. To the west, we had the bay, with the islands, the gulf of Gaeta, an exquisite blending of land and water, and the sea; while southward, the Apennines, and the Sorrentine shore, with the gulf of Salerno, through vistas in the peaks, formed altogether a lovely panorama. Then most of the Campagna Felice stretched beneath my eye, like an Eden, walled by mountains. It was a Swiss view in extent, embellished by a true Italian radiance. Naples lay, like a town seen in a camera obscura, against its hills, a brilliant accessory, and the sails that hovered near the port resembled specks. A heavy Russian frigate was riding off the mole, and

her fair proportions were distinctly visible through the pure medium, though diminished and fairy-like. I say, the pure medium; for the clouds came and went repeatedly, frequently shutting us in for minutes, and then sailing away, like birds, towards some other peak. The contrasts of these moments were sublime; for while nothing could be more infernal than the crater in its gloom, aided by the accompaniments of the volcano, nothing was more soft and radiant than the picture the earth presented when the veil was removed. The body sympathized with the mind; for the clouds brought the chill of a fog, which the sun relieved by its genial warmth as the vapour departed.

I could have passed the day on the mountain with pleasure; but W—— unaccountably betrayed a physical debility that was extraordinary for one of his active habits, and we descended, after passing a couple of hours on the summit. The descent of the cone was an affair of five minutes. All we had to do was to keep the body perfectly erect, and to throw

the leg forward freely; the rapidity of the fall causing us to go down some six or eight feet each step. The shock was completely destroyed by the yielding of the cinders; and, in addition to preserving the perpendicular, the only precaution observed was to stop occasionally, in order not to acquire too much momentum. At the foot of the cone we mounted, and proceeded to Portici, without halting at the Hermitage.

The next morning, previously to returning to Sorrento, the consul accompanied us on board the Russian frigate. This vessel is called the Princess of Lowertcz, after the wife, by a Morganic marriage, of the Grand Duke Constantine. She is a noble frigate, though not very elegant. Her crew appeared sturdy; though the officers had not sufficiently the air of Russians of rank to prove that the service is in favour. No nation will ever have an efficient marine unless its sympathies are strongly with it, as men removed from the public eye, on the high seas, will not exert themselves sufficiently on any other terms. It is a proof of a want of this sympathy, when men of the upper

classes avoid the service. This is one reason why the French marine has never done anything in proportion to its cost. The nation knows so little of maritime affairs, that anything passes for good; and the public feeling is altogether with the army. Thus, France has been completely mystified with the affair of Navarino; while England says as little about it as may be. Any seaman can appreciate a battle, in which twelve line-of-battle ships are ranged against a few heavy frigates, forts of no strength, and a maze of corvettes. Vessels of the quality of those of Ibrahim could not, at anchor, be brought to act on any one point in sufficient numbers to overcome a fleet like that under Sir Edward Codrington, if indeed it could be done on the high seas. I see, by a trial now going on in England, that the flagship fired less than three rounds in this general engagement!

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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